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# CREATIVE CHRISTIANITY



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claims intention to formulate a new creed, to define the limits of Christian brotherhood, to compromise, or to sanction, the views of individual members on the points wherein they differ.

It is hoped that the publication of the addresses will fulfil over a wider area the purpose their delivery originally fulfilled. Their aim is to give leading in a time of much confusion of theological thought, when Evangelical doctrines and interpretations essential to the faithful presentation of the Gospel of Christ are being called in question.

*October, 1921.*

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## SCIENCE AND THE BIBLE

BY THE VERY REV. THE DEAN OF CANTERBURY

THE Bible and Science are the two great influences by which in the present day the life of our country, and of most Western countries, is moulded. The Bible, in the first place, enshrines the moral and spiritual forces which are the source of our civilization, and by which it is chiefly controlled. The first principles of duty towards God and man, which we have inherited, were revealed by means of the history contained in that Book, and it is the imperishable record of their origin and their development. Whether men like it or not, they cannot escape from it, for it constitutes the very atmosphere of the religious, social, domestic, and even political, life around them. For this reason alone, it must always be approached with profound reverence by all thoughtful minds, even by

those who resist its authority. But to those who, like ourselves, accept its authority, it must needs be the most momentous thing in the world, as the one supreme revelation of God's personal relation to us, and of His action towards ourselves and mankind. But side by side with this, Science, in the widest sense of that word, constitutes also an immense and ever-growing force, with an all-pervading influence. It surrounds us on all sides, because nature itself surrounds us; and Man has been justly called the "minister and interpreter of nature." From birth to the grave, in all the circumstances of our daily existence, the hand of Science, in one form or another, is upon us, fashioning our external condition behind and before, just as Conscience and the light of the Bible fashion our internal condition. By moulding continually the circumstances of our daily life, it affects our relations to one another, and modifies the whole state of mankind. The great scientific discoveries of the last two generations have, for instance, modified the whole condition of the human race by bringing them together in a union never dreamed before, and thus affecting incalculably their mutual duties and

influences. To a large extent, it has come as a new force before the generations to which I am old enough to belong ; and it has been gradually forcing its way to its due place in the world, side by side with the old force of the Bible. In the various stages of this process, in imperfect forms and hasty anticipations, it has come into contact and conflict with the old, and sometimes obsolete, forms of ancient belief and tradition ; and we have been passing through an anxious period of mutual adjustments and understandings, which have sometimes, for a while, been of the nature of misunderstandings. But those who can look back, as by God's mercy I can, to some seventy years of growth in thought, in both the Bible and Science, can hardly fail to recognize with thankfulness that those two great forces have been working towards an ever-growing harmony, and have been combining to illuminate and elevate the whole thought and life of men. They are the expression, in fact, of the two great cardinal faculties of man—*faith* and *reason* ; faith, concerned mainly with the great moral and spiritual realities, and reason invested with the supreme and universal power of intellectual

judgment. They are one in their Divine origin, one in their grand purpose of illuminating and blessing mankind ; and any apparent collision between them must necessarily be due to some temporary misunderstanding.

This is the point of view from which this subject should always be approached, and I am thankful that, at the present moment, there are several circumstances which serve in a singular degree to illustrate and confirm it. I may venture to say, in the first place, that I think I should be treating this audience with disrespect if I were to trouble them with much argument in behalf of the compatibility of the revelations of Science with the records of miracles in the Scriptures. I think that reasonable men will acquiesce in the conviction expressed by the late Dr. Sanday, after reviewing the evidence, in his work on *The Life of Christ and Recent Research*, that it is " as certain as our own existence " that " miracles happened in the full conviction and belief of the early Christians, and with the full significance that they attached to miracles." One of the striking points on which he dwells is the testimony of St. Luke to miraculous occurrences, in his own personal experience in



the companionship of St. Paul. It has sometimes been said that it would be desirable to have medical evidence of the miracles of healing ; and it is therefore very remarkable that this precise form of testimony is provided in the evidence of St. Luke, who is acknowledged to have been a physician, trained in Greek Science. On the other hand, in face of the acceptance of miracles by many of the most distinguished men of Science of our generation, it would seem altogether unnecessary to vindicate their possibility from the point of view of Science. It is enough to quote the statement of the late Professor Sir George Stokes in his Gifford Lecture. He there says (p. 23) : “ It may be that the event which we call a miracle was brought about not by any suspension of the laws in ordinary operation, but by the super-addition of something not ordinarily in operation, or, if in operation, of such a nature that its operation is not easily perceived.” The New Testament reveals that we are surrounded by what it speaks of as a “ multitude ” of spiritual and angelic forces, not ordinarily visible to us, and a miracle would be sufficiently accounted for by the intervention, at the Divine command,

of one of those invisible forces, to modify, not the laws of nature, but simply the ordinary course of nature. I would only add, on this subject, that the fact that our Lord worked numberless miracles is indissolubly bound up with the credibility of the Gospel narratives ; and, further, that they are not merely evidence of His authority, but a vital part of His revelation. They reveal His having power in action. He asked men to believe that He was a Saviour because He saved them. They reveal Him, far more than any words could do, as “ the Lord of life and death, and of all things to them pertaining.” The Bible and the New Testament, in short, reveal the fact that a Supernatural atmosphere is all around us ; Science does not, and cannot, disprove it ; while it may be added that the amazing discoveries and achievements of Science itself, during the last quarter of a century, have revealed possibilities in physical nature which would formerly have been deemed nothing less than miraculous.

Let us pass, therefore, from this general recognition of Supernatural possibilities, to the first grand feature in which the Bible and Physical Science come into contact—I mean

the first chapter of the Book of Genesis. This has pre-eminently been the occasion of hasty interpretations and of consequent misunderstandings. The Book of Genesis was thought to describe a succession of sudden and almost spasmodic creations; and when Geology revealed the gradual, orderly and progressive development of the world, it was thought at first that the two were in contradiction to one another. It was soon, however, realized that the first chapter of Genesis is cast in an imaginative and poetic form, which was quite inconsistent with any prosaic literalness of detail. On the other hand, it was observed that the developments revealed by Geology were in general correspondence in a singular degree with the order of creation as recorded in Genesis. Upon this ensued a vehement debate between eminent representatives of the Bible on the one side, and of Science on the other, as to the exactness of this correspondence; it being elaborately debated whether the order in which two or three particular creatures appeared in Geology was precisely the same as that in which it was recorded in Genesis. Is it not strange that it hardly seems to have occurred to many

people to reflect, what an amazing thing it was that there should be any room for debate at all whether the narrative contained in a Book some three or four thousand years old, was exactly in accordance with the latest results of Modern Science? That there should have been such an approximation between the two must be either a piece of amazing guess-work or of amazing information. As the result of a generation of such debates, I submit that the true view of the case is that it is a most conspicuous instance of the way in which Science has thrown light upon the Bible, and helped us to understand it. To our prosaic Western minds the first chapter of Genesis was a record of successive acts of creation, occurring independently, each within a definite period which was called a day, and all combining to illustrate, and assert, the grand truth, that the whole world is the creation of one God. But the discoveries of Geology have interpreted that chapter to us and given to it a living meaning throughout. It has shown us that the author, whoever he was, was enabled to draw a broad and vivid general sketch of the development of the world from primordial chaos, to its condition,

full of life of all kinds, when man appeared upon it. Are there a few inaccuracies in detail? How could it be otherwise in a short sketch of so many ages of development? Once when I had to write a short paper on a great subject, and was perplexed how to deal with some details, a great master of the art of popular writing told me to remember that I had to do scene painting. That was what the author of the first chapter of Genesis had to do; and he did it so well, that one of the Presidents of the British Association, the late Sir William Dawson, not many years ago, said "it would not be easy, even now, to construct a statement of the development of the world in popular terms so concise and so accurate." (Sir William Dawson in the *Expositor* for Feb., 1894). Geology and Astronomy have together enabled us to appreciate the true significance of that picture, and the manner in which it enables us to survey, in one rapid glance, the marvellous and orderly development, or evolution, if you will, of the long ages of the world's life. Science reveals a long succession of facts, which Genesis comprehends in one vivid picture; and, Genesis reveals the Divine hand, and the Divine



purpose, which were working through all those ages of Divine creation. Instead of there being any antagonism between the Bible and Science in this grand opening of Scripture, they illuminate one another, and combine to produce a profound revelation.

The narrative of the commencement of human life and of the Fall will, I understand, be treated in a paper which follows this, and I will not intrude upon it. But I may be allowed, in passing, to observe that the whole of the opening chapters of Genesis have the same marvellous—I had almost said *miraculous*—power of the first chapter, in revealing the general characteristics of man's position. I wonder whether what seems to many the strange statement of Adam giving names to every creature, be not an imaginative announcement of the commencement of Science itself. All Science is more or less a classification of natural objects, of giving names to things and distinguishing them. Lord Bacon derived his second title of his *Novum Organum*, from which the movement of Modern Science started, from the first chapter of Genesis. He offered, he said, true suggestions "respecting the interpretation of

nature and the dominion of man"; and his second Aphorism, describing man as the minister and interpreter of nature, might be regarded as the counterpart of the sacred historian's vision of Adam as giving names to living creatures.

But I must pass from this fascinating view of the relation between the Book of Genesis and Physical Science, to its relation to Historical Science and Literary Criticism. Here we are on much more debatable ground, on which keen controversy is still raging. But here, too, let us, in the first instance, observe the immense support which recent Archæological Science has given to our faith in the Bible. At a time when it was taken for granted that the sole author of the Book of Genesis was Moses, it must have been perplexing to any critical reflection to consider how the numberless details, genealogical, tribal and domestic, could have been conveyed to a mind, writing, as Moses would have done, some hundreds of years after the events. Of course, it could have been done by a miracle, but it would have been a miracle of a most perplexing character. But now that it has been revealed to us, by Archæological Science,

that the art of writing, and the practice of recording circumstances of daily life, were in use long before the time of Abraham, the preservation of records like those of Genesis has become perfectly intelligible. It is a striking and instructive thing to bear in mind that the great structure of German Criticism, for at least the first half of the last century, was formed in the absence of any knowledge of the use of the art of writing in these ancient times. The first volume of the *Speakers' Commentary* was published in 1870, after I had been ten years in Holy Orders ; and the author of the Commentary on Genesis, one of the most learned Hebrew scholars of the day, the late Bishop Harold Browne, had to spend some time in considering the question, whether Moses, even Moses, could have used the art of writing. A great deal, therefore, of German speculation was carried forward in ignorance of one of the most vital facts in the case. We have now tablets in Babylonian cuneiform, recording myths respecting the origin of the earth ; and though it is a perfectly arbitrary supposition that the narrative of Genesis is in any way founded upon them, it is obvious that this narrative may have been similarly

recorded and handed down. At all events, it would be quite in accordance with what Science has discovered of the habits of the ancient people of Babylonia, and the neighbouring countries, that genealogical details, legal contracts, and historical incidents should have been handed down, from generation to generation, upon clay tablets. For Moses to have compiled from such tablets the early history of the Hebrew race implies nothing more miraculous than for St. Luke to have compiled, from the written, as well as oral materials at his command, the narrative of his Gospel. A narrative like that in the fourteenth chapter of Genesis may thus be really contemporary with the events recorded. It is thus scientifically probable that we are reading in the Book of Genesis some of the earliest writings of mankind, instead of fictions of Scribes of the Exile, as German Criticism has often supposed. The Supernatural feature of the book is the inspired guidance, which impelled the compiler, who recorded these incidents in the ancient history of mankind, to select those incidents of the ancient history which would exhibit the Divine plan of choosing one family to be the

instrument of revelation and the centre of the world's history. The mere fact that the history of Abraham and his descendants should have been thus selected and recorded, as the family from which the Lord Jesus Christ descended, exhibits a prophetic foresight of a very extraordinary character. Thus what Physical Science has done for the first chapter of Genesis, Archæological Science has done for the rest of the book. It has elucidated its composition, and brought it more within the range of reasonable belief.

But when we pass from Genesis to the history of the Hebrew people after the Exodus, we enter on a field in which traditional belief and Literary and Archæological Science are still in vehement conflict. According to the conclusions, which until very recently held the field in German Criticism, and which have obtained a singular degree of predominance in England, the narratives of the Books of Exodus, Numbers, Leviticus, and Deuteronomy have presented a delusive picture to the world. The impression which was accepted from them, ever since the return from the Exile, and which prevailed in our Lord's day, is that they are, in a general



sense, *The Books of Moses*. That title no more implies that the whole of them were written by Moses, any more than the title of the "Psalms of David" implies that all the Psalms were written by David. What it involves is that they have Mosaic authority; and particularly that the Book of Deuteronomy contains, as it undoubtedly professes to contain, the discourses delivered by Moses at the close of his career. But this whole structure of traditional belief has been challenged by the criticism of which I speak. It is alleged that Deuteronomy was not delivered by Moses, but written hundreds of years later, for the purposes of a later crisis in Jewish history; and that large elements, at least, of the narratives of these books are fictitious—that, for instance, there never was a structure like the tabernacle in the wilderness. Now it seems to me vain to attempt to evade the consequence, that books containing such a mass of late fiction, and composed with such success as to delude Jews and Christians for two thousand years, could not be regarded as the word of God or as having Inspired authority. If, therefore, this Critical view were scientifically established, if it were an

unquestioned result of Literary and Historical Criticism, we should have to abandon the implicit faith in the truth of the Scriptures which the Christian Church has entertained from the first, and which, it cannot be reasonably disputed, was held by our Lord Himself.

But the time has come when it must be loudly declared that these Critical conclusions are not scientifically established, but, on the contrary, that they are vehemently contested by great scholars in Germany, France and America, as well as by scholars in Great Britain, of the learning and authority of the late lamented Dr. Orr. I have to-day read a paper at the Victoria Institute, in which it is explained that one of the most learned and authoritative scholars of Germany, Professor Koenig, of Bonn University, while he accepts the current German view of the so-called sources of the Pentateuch, maintains, nevertheless, that the narratives in those sources are substantially historical; and that, in particular, the narratives of Abraham's life, and of God's communication to him, are true, and record the foundation of the Divine scheme of redemption. In addition to this, Dr. Neville, Professor at the University of

Geneva, the eminent Egyptian Archæologist, is maintaining in a series of powerful addresses, not only in Switzerland, but in Paris, that the whole of the Pentateuch is Mosaic in its origin ; and he is supported in this contention by some of the foremost Historical scholars of France, such as M. Camille Jullian, of the Institute. In America the German theories were long ago contested by Professor Green, one of the American members of the Revision Company of the Old Testament ; and a succession of American scholars, of whom one of the most remarkable is Dr. Kyle, who has lately published very important Studies on the subject, are resolutely supporting in substance the traditional belief. In view of these facts, it is not only unduly arrogant, but it is scarcely honest, for recent Handbooks and popular Reviews to be asserting that the Critical view is established. It is still, to say the very least, *sub judice* (under judgment), and while it is in this position, the ancient traditions, the traditions accepted by our Lord, and His Apostles, and the whole of the Christian Church, ought to be regarded as in possession of the field.

Through all this discussion one con-

sideration has always seemed to me to be paramount. The Critical theory supposes that the Jews, at and after Ezra's time, accepted a view of the history of their nation which was entirely contrary to the actual facts of that history. Apart from all questions of Inspiration, that would seem, especially in the case of so tenacious a people, to be practically impossible ; and there must, consequently, be some fatal flaw in the ingenious contentions of the Critics. I cannot but add, that the supposition that the Messiah of the Jews was not only ignorant of the true authorship of the books of Moses, but, as would follow, was mistaken, like His contemporaries, as to the course of the history of His own sacred race, is, at all events, a Christian impossibility. On the whole, therefore, I submit that, while Critical Archæological Science has done an immense deal to support the credibility of the Bible, it has proved nothing, though it may have alleged much, to impair its credibility, and that we are not only justified, but bound, to adhere to the faith in the ancient Scriptures which has been handed down to us from our Lord and His Apostles.

I think it is unnecessary for me to say much, in conclusion, as to the relation of Criticism and Archæology to the New Testament. At the time when I entered Holy Orders, sixty years ago, the Tübingen School, which undermined the whole historical credibility of the Acts of the Apostles and of most of the Epistles of St. Paul, was as influential in Germany as the Wellhausen School has since been in respect to the Old Testament. But it is enough to refer to the striking introductory lecture delivered last October by Professor Turner, at Oxford, in succeeding Dr. Loch as Professor of Exegesis, to recognize how completely the destructive conclusions of that school, and of its successors, have been overthrown by the further course of Criticism, and by archæological discoveries, such as those of Professor Ramsay, of Aberdeen. Criticism, I confess, still seems to me much astray in respect to the position of the Gospels; and Professor Turner appears still to hesitate in his view of the authenticity of the Gospel of St. John. But when negative Criticism has, by general confession, been overpowered in so large a portion of the New Testament field,

we are again not only justified, but under an obligation, to give our full confidence and faith to the uniform tradition of the first Christian generations, and to believe that in the Gospels, in the Acts of the Apostles, and in the authentic Epistles, we have the testimony and Apostolic witness of men whom the Holy Ghost inspired to hand down to future generations the words, the deeds and the spirit of Christ. The Old and the New Testaments together may still be regarded, in full harmony with the evidence of Science, as the word of God. We may still be assured that we have in them, in all substantial verity, the whole of what is summarily described in the opening verse of the Epistle to the Hebrews : " God, Who at many times and in many manners, spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, hath in these last days spoken unto us by His Son,"



# MODERN THOUGHT AND THE FALL

BY MR. D. M. PANTON, B.A.

Two books of the Bible, and perhaps two supremely, have been the objects of Satan's bitterest attacks—Genesis and Revelation; the book that betrays his origin, and the book that discloses his destiny. But there is a profounder reason for the assault than mere pride or pique. The germ of all things is in Genesis, and the clue to all mysteries is in Revelation: therefore to destroy these two books, revelation's source and goal, is the destruction of *the* Book. "In the beginning God"—are the splendid portals through which we pass from eternity into time; "Even so come, Lord Jesus"—are the massive gateways by which we pass back again into eternity: beyond these Pillars of Hercules, backward, the human mind cannot

travel; and through the Gates of Pearl, forward, we catch only broken gleams of the immeasurable glory. To overthrow Genesis and Revelation is to destroy—at least as far as revelation is concerned—the origin and ultimate of all things.

Now the moral centre of Genesis is the Fall; and apparently it is the extraordinary simplicity of the drama, though concealing as it does a fathomless profundity, which stumbles modern thought. "There was no garden in Mesopotamia at a particular date," says Bishop Gore, "with a particular man and woman, and a serpent and certain wonderful trees."<sup>1</sup> To imagine Eden a setting too small and cramped, a drama too incredibly simple, to be charged with the destiny of a world is the fallacy of measuring the virulence of a cholera germ by its bulk. Man was put by God under the simplest conceivable law, and in the simplest conceivable conditions: therefore, endowed as he was with a nature in itself innocent and good, if he sinned, he sinned against the clearest light, and against the sharpest knowledge. He fell *in Paradise*. The simple pulling of

<sup>1</sup> *The Fall of Man*, p. 7.

a trigger can make a man a murderer for all eternity.

Sin is a principle, a seed, a germ, a contagion ; no sooner is a sin born, however minute, than it becomes the mother of a million sins ; there is no point about sin more dreadful than its infinite capacity for reproducing itself, its abominable and boundless fertility. So the Holy Ghost says :—“ Through *one* man ”—the fountain of human blood ; the sample man, because no man can deny that he too would have acted exactly as Adam did—“ sin *entered* into the world, and death through sin ” ; entered, for both sin and death are for ever aliens in the universe of God ; “ and so death passed unto all men ”—‘ travelled ’ (Alford) like a submarine torpedo—“ for that all sinned ” (Rom. v. 12) in Eden. When God made Adam, He made all men ; for the race is no aggregate of isolated and independent units, but an entity of organic and dependent generations ; and, since God made of ‘ one blood ’ all the nations of men, sin introduced *anywhere* is sin introduced *everywhere*. The fall of Adam was the fall of souls at this moment not yet born ; and the fact of their sinning,

when born, will for ever prove the truth of the doctrine.

Now upon this organic fall of all in the one God builds the whole structure of redemption; for He takes this very principle of solidarity, which was our ruin, and makes that solidarity the organ of the world's salvation. "For *as* through the *one* man's disobedience the many were made sinners"—sinners by a representative act, sinners by a fouled nature inherited, sinners ourselves by active choice—"EVEN SO"—God taking the solidarity which ruined as the solidarity which shall redeem—"through the obedience of the *One* shall the many be made righteous." The helpless fall of the race into death through the act of a lonely man is countered by a helpless salvation for the entire race wrought by a Man as lonely and unique. That is, God incarnate in human flesh, the Second Man, is so organically one with the race *as* a race—so *the* Son of man, not *a* son of man—that His righteousness is (potentially) imputed to all as actually and really as is Adam's sin. The first Adam was the federal head of the race; the last Adam is equally the federal head of the race: the first Adam, the law-

breaker, is replaced by the last Adam, the law-fulfiller : the first man acted for all mankind, and plunged the world into ruin ; the Second Man acted for all mankind, and lifted the world into (potential) salvation : Adam was the author of death to all ; Christ is the Author of life for all. Thus the doctrine of the Fall lies at the root of all redemption. " Death," says Canon Barnes, " did not come into the world through human sin : there was no first man made in the image of God." <sup>1</sup> It is manifest that if there be no first Adam, there could be no last. But the Holy Ghost says :—" So then as through *one* trespass "—for however often Adam sinned afterwards, *we* fell only by the one act that introduced *sin itself*—" the judgment came unto *all men* to condemnation ; EVEN SO"—God turning solidarity, the organ of condemnation, into solidarity, the organ of grace—" through *one* righteousness the free gift came unto *all men* to justification of life." If the first limb of the parallel is a myth, disaster and ruin overwhelm the second limb : on the other hand, if the Second Head of the race really died for all, it could only be because in the First Head

<sup>1</sup> *Manchester Guardian*, Sept. 17, 1920.

all had died. As Adam ruined us through sin foreign to us, without our fault ; so Christ has saved us with a righteousness foreign to us, without our merit : and the Holy Spirit thus rests our entire redemption on the historical, actual, personal fall of the *first* man countered by the historical, actual, personal death and resurrection of the Second.

Inconceivably solemn and weighted with latter-day doom is the main consequence of a denial of the Fall, which one approaches with a shudder. " Though we abandon belief," says Canon Barnes, " that the Fall was an historical event, *the fact of sin remains.*" <sup>1</sup> Now if sin is a fact, and a fact not chargeable to man, it must be chargeable to God : whether through creation or evolution is immaterial—if man did not *fall*, the sin that is in him must have been in him in his origin, at his creation—that is, God must have *created* him sinful : if sin is not man's choice, it is God's responsibility. The dilemma is inexorable. *This is precisely the goal at which the Spirit saith expressly* (1 Tim. iv. 1-3) *we shall arrive in the last days.* Once again looms on the horizon a blundering or else a malignant

<sup>1</sup> *Record*, Sept. 16, 1920.



Demiurge, who, handling forces he could not control, bungled against his will into a sinful creation ; or else, himself an evil being, made matter itself evil ; a creator or evolver who either could not or would not control that which he had himself created or evolved. Gnosticism was born in an attempt to solve the problem of evil, and exactly on that spot it will be born afresh. It is inexpressibly startling to hear this sentence from the chief living protagonist of a denial of the Fall :—“ Those of us who hold that He [Christ] was God Incarnate before His Death, *and God Discarnate afterwards.*”<sup>1</sup> Whether it be Docetic Gnosticism, which regarded the Lord’s humanity as phantasmal, or Ebionite Gnosticism, which asserted that the Divine Being finally abandoned Jesus upon the cross—all Gnosticism insisted, and will insist again, that the Son of God is now discarnate<sup>2</sup> : hence the terrible words of the great anti-Gnostic Apostle,—“ they that confess not that Jesus Christ *cometh* [R.V.] IN THE FLESH ; this is the deceiver and the antichrist ” (2 John 7).

<sup>1</sup> Canon Barnes’ *Spiritualism and the Christian Faith*, p. 27.

<sup>2</sup> See Dean Mansel’s *Gnostic Heresies*, p. III.

The giant theosophies of the East are once again laying their octopus arms about the Church of Christ, in an embrace of death. If a megaphone huge enough to reach the churches of God throughout the globe were handed to me with the permission to speak through it three sentences, and three sentences only, one sentence would be this:—*Gnosticism is the precipice over which the Church on earth will meet her doom.* In the words of Dr. P. T. Forsyth:—"The reproduction to-day of second-century Gnosticism is exceedingly close, and often startling. It was then that the Church had the first and greatest fight for its life. If Gnosis had prevailed, the Church and the Gospel would have gone under. It is equally to-day a question of life and death. The whole of the Christian Gospel is involved, the whole future of religion indeed. Let there be no mistake."<sup>1</sup>

So all the glory gathers at last about one lonely Brow. "The first man Adam *became*"—after the corpse was moulded, and when the nostrils were inbreathed of God—"a *living soul*"—neither mortal nor immortal, but simply alive, at the will of God; "the last

<sup>1</sup> *British Congregationalist*, Jan. 24, 1907.

Adam *became*”—when the inherent Divine power to give life had been liberated by a work finished through an atoning cross and an empty tomb—“A LIFE-GIVING SPIRIT” (1 Cor. xv. 45), a regenerator, the Lord and Giver of life. Christ is the *Last* Adam, for there are only two Heads of the race, and to all eternity there will be no fresh Adam, and therefore no fresh Fall; but He is the *Second* Man (as Paul says), for though millions intervened between Adam and Himself, He was a man of a new *kind*, the introducer of a fresh family, the creator of a new type of humanity. Both Heads of the race have a vast following; for to Adam belonged the power of generation, and to Christ belongs the power of regeneration; and as we are made one with the First Man by ordinary birth, so we are made one with the Second Man by the second birth. “As is the earthy, such are they also that are *earthy*”—Adam’s countless unregenerate breed; “and as is the heavenly, such are they also that are *heavenly*”—all in whom, after a divine birth, the image of Adam is fading and melting into the image of Christ. And for both types of men the Incarnation has emptied every tomb. “For *since* by

man came death"—since ; because of the right balance of things ; because death was a *human* product—" by MAN came also the resurrection of the dead " : Adam dug a grave for every one of us ; for every one of us Christ will burst that grave. " For as in Adam all *die* "—the total race condemned to death in the fountain of their blood—" so ALSO "—with identical universality—" in Christ shall all be *made alive* " : for a *Man* has glorified God as no other in the universe has, and has lifted all humanity out of the grave for ever. It is the fathomless mystery of the Incarnation. As little as the sun could descend from his place in the heavens without disintegrating, or reintegrating, the whole solar system ; so little could the Eternal Christ descend from the heavens to become man without altering the orbit and destiny of every human soul : so organically is He one with the human, so essentially is He (as He said) Resurrection and Life, that all humanity sprang as one man from the grave—however the actual event may be delayed—when the Syrian stone was rolled away. Heaven and Hell lie beyond these emptied graves, but " O grave, I will be *thy* destruc-

tion ! ” (Hosea xiii. 14), saith Jehovah. So we stand at last upon the Crystal Sea ; and as those who are overwhelmed by incomprehensible grace and unintelligible love, we cry with Paul :—“ O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God ! how unsearchable are His judgments, and His ways past finding out ! ” (Rom. xi. 33).





# THE HOLY SPIRIT IN RELATION TO "FUNDAMENTAL TRUTHS"

BY THE REV. DR. F. B. MEYER

You will remember it is said on the very threshold of Scripture, that the Spirit of God brooded upon the face of the waters. And all through the earlier dispensation the Holy Spirit was ever inspiring and empowering teachers, prophets, psalmists, and kings. Why, then, is it said by our Lord—"When He is come"? Or, why is it said by the Evangelist—"The Spirit was not yet"? Does not that indicate that the Day of Pentecost was the beginning of *the temporal Mission of the Holy Spirit*? Let us stay here for a moment that we may understand exactly what is meant. We know that our Blessed Lord, the Holy Son of the Father, the Word of God, by Whom all things were made, was ever working on the hearts of men before

His Incarnation ; but His Incarnation inaugurated what we may describe as His temporal mission, and from the moment of His birth to the moment of His Ascension there was a great difference in the character of His operations. Similarly the Holy Spirit was from the Creation in the world, but the Day of Pentecost inaugurated a new era. St. Augustine calls the Day of Pentecost *Dies Natalis*—"The birthday of the Holy Spirit." In other words, as our Lord was united to a human body in His Incarnation, so the Holy Spirit was united to a body of humanity at Pentecost. In the case of our Lord, it was the body born of the Virgin. In the case of Pentecost, the body was the Infant Church. Just as the Lord Jesus wrought through the Body born at Bethlehem, so during this dispensation the Holy Spirit is present among men, and is working upon their hearts and lives through the body—the Church.

There is a very profound and helpful way of viewing the relation between our Saviour and the Comforter. There are two Paracletes, as you know. "He will send *another* Paraclete." We know also that in the first epistle

of St. John we are told that we have one Advocate, or Paraclete, with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous, whilst we learn from the words of our Lord in John xv. and xvi. that the other Paraclete is with us here in the Church. Just as the one Paraclete, at the close of His temporal mission, ascended to the right hand of the Father, so the Holy Spirit, the other Paraclete, came down to tenant the Church, or, if you prefer another phrase—to occupy the Church as His throne. The word “See,” which is generally identified with the Roman Catholic Church, is from the Latin *sedére*, meaning “to sit.” The idea is that as the one Paraclete sat down at the right hand of the Father until His enemies are made His footstool, the other Paraclete has come to sit upon the throne of the Church—the Church universal. Further than that, wherever two or three people habitually gather for the maintenance of the Sacraments and the preaching of the Word, there you have the Church in its microcosm, the Church as a unit ; and every true minister of the Gospel when he stands in his pulpit, and is surrounded by a godly Church, is conscious that not only is the

Spirit speaking through and with him, but that the Spirit is co-operating in the Church. Thus there is a dual influence which is being promoted in that congregation by the Holy Spirit.

During this dispensation the Holy Spirit works His wonderful work through the Church. The Lord said: "When He is come to you He will convince the world of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment," and one of the holy sanctions of our ministry is this—that the Holy Spirit is really tenanting His body, the Church. Now, if that be so, we naturally take one further step to inquire what His special object is, and surely there is only one answer—it is to glorify our Lord. In the morning when the light steals into our rooms, or breaks over this city, we are not conscious of seeing the light, but we see what the light reveals. Similarly we may not be aware of the presence of the Holy Spirit, because He hides Himself that He may cast the fullest possible light on the face of our Lord. Years ago, when a number of theologians were discussing in my presence the work of the Holy Spirit, a young merchant from Glasgow broke in towards the end of

the conversation, and said : “ May I say a word ? You have been speaking much about the Holy Spirit, but for me the Holy Spirit is the Revealer of Christ ; and, if ever I lose the sense of the Presence of Christ, I leave my factory, go alone into my counting-house, lock the door, and kneel down saying : ‘ Blessed Spirit, what have I done to grieve Thee, that Thou hast withdrawn the light from the face of my Lord ? ’ ” The mission of the Holy Spirit, therefore, is to reveal and glorify Christ ; just as the light steals over London to reveal and glorify all the great edifices, the spires of which tower upward to catch its first beams.

Will you notice, further, that when the Spirit glorifies Christ He does so by taking of the Truth, revealing it, shedding light upon it, making it apparent ; and all truth is gathered up in the glorious Person of our Lord. It is through the illumination that He gives to the Truth that we come to know the fullness of the glory that eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, nor the heart of man perceived, but which is embodied in the Lord Jesus Christ. This, therefore, is the witness of the Spirit.

There are two witnesses—the Written Word and the Holy Spirit Who takes that Word and applies it to the conscience and to the heart. All through the ages, therefore, when any one side of truth has been lost sight of, when the full creed embodied in Christ has become obscured, the Holy Spirit sheds an irradiating ray on that forgotten or ignored phase. What is a Revival but an incursion, or, if I may say so, a tidal wave of the Holy Ghost, which brings back to the consciousness of men some truth which has been somewhat overlooked or overlaid by tradition or formalism !

We live between two worlds, the transcendental and the material, the spiritual and the physical ; the one is the real world, the other is the world of illusion and change, a transient reflection of the Eternal. By our spirit we are articulated to the real, the eternal, and spiritual ; and, by our body to the physical, the material, the transient. This is the choice that confronts all men and women born into the world, whether they are going to climb up the spiral staircase into the spiritual, or descend down through the lower regions of their nature into contact



with the material. Each of us day by day is either stepping up or stepping down. We, who by the grace of God have been born again of the Spirit, and are exercising a constant faith in Christ, are articulated with the spiritual world by the indwelling energy of the Holy Spirit. One of the enduements of that life is that of Intuition, which St. Paul refers to when he says “The love of Christ *passeth knowledge.*” There is a knowledge of the spiritual, the eternal, the divine, which is not intellectual, but the direct result of intuition. I want to labour this for a moment. I think we shall never understand our impregnable position in holding the truth of God until we realize that just as by the senses of our body we apprehend the external world, so by a spiritual sense we become immediately conscious of the world of spirit. The gift of intuition makes us as aware of the unseen and eternal, of the glorified and blessed world above us, as we are of the material world around us. And it is to intuition that the Holy Spirit addresses Himself. Just as the light shed upon London reveals London, and we see London by that light, so the light of the Holy Spirit reflected

upon the face of Jesus our Blessed Lord makes Him a living reality, and we become as definitely sure of His eternal presence with us as we are sure of anything upon which the eye may rest. Therefore St. Paul, when he came back from Arabia, was constantly talking about the things he had received from Christ ; and when he reached Peter's home, whither he went directly he left Arabia, as the Apostle retailed to him the parting messages of the Lord, Paul would reply : " Thank God, I have received all this ; I realize it all ; I am assured of it all, because it has been revealed to me by the direct intuition of the Spirit of God. Intuition is as certain as mathematics, and as sure as the reasonings of the philosopher. It deals with necessary truth and with truth that is universal in its range. When once you see, you can never unsee ; and you know that it is yours for ever. When our heart is pure it has a natural affinity to revealed truth, and more especially to truth revealed in the character and words of Christ. There is a leaping up of the spirit in intuition ; and you say : Yes, thank God, I know this is true.

We have now reached to two lines of

thought. Let us weave them together. Our first point was that the Holy Spirit is in the Church, glorifying Christ by taking the truths that are embodied in His nature and work, focusing His light upon these, and making them apparent. Secondly, we have seen that the organ which the Holy Spirit deals with is not an intellectual but an intuitive faculty—a faculty of man's spirit. Now let us proceed.

The Holy Spirit is the custodian of truth. He is the Defender of the Faith. His mission in the world to keep before the hearts and minds of men the glorious facts of the eternal world as they are embodied in Christ. When a certain truth has fallen into disuse, He calls out one man—it may be an Athanasius, Luther, Zinzendorf, or Wesley—and brings him through the liberating force of that forgotten aspect of truth into its intense realization and advocacy. Through Himself and the truth that soul awakes and bears its witness. Then presently, a number of those to whom that illumined soul communicates its knowledge, intuitively and instantly recognize its worth. And so the conviction spreads, and is acknowledged as germane and radical.

Finally it is used by the Spirit of God to convict the world of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment; and in the effect that He produces through that Truth, upon masses of people, bringing forth the fruits of a revived spiritual life, it is proved to be a necessary link in the chain of eternal and essential Revelation.

Let me illustrate to you what I mean.

Take the case when Arianism threatened to overspread the world. The Holy Blessed Spirit could not remain in the Church and allow the glory of the Lord to be ignored. Therefore Athanasius was called out and definitely taught and quickened. His testimony to the truth inspired the great Council of Nicæa, his passion for the Deity of Christ, though he stood alone against the world, led to the re-affirmation of that vital truth, and the beams of morning light broke upon the world again.

Let us come down the stream of time to the days of the Reformation. All Europe lay under the spell of an Apostate Church. It seemed as though Rome had achieved her purpose, and that the apostolic religion was dead. Then Luther was called out. He was

led to discover the Bible in the Monastery of Erfurt, and to read it. The Spirit of God illumined the truth. When he began to preach the doctrine of Justification by Faith, the human heart instinctively recognized that this was the way of righteousness and acceptance with God. The result was the ultimate conviction of the world, and the introduction of a purer and nobler type of religious experience.

The same thing happened with Wesley. Before his time England was full of formalism and infidelity ; the conception of a holy life had almost faded from the hearts of men. But God led Wesley into the secret place, and illumined his soul. When Whitfield and he began to preach, the truth they taught was recognized intuitively by earnest souls ; and presently a revival broke out, which spread throughout the country ; and the result was the beginning of social reform that abolished the Corn Laws, the slave trade, and the degraded condition of the prisons, and culminated in the life of the late Earl of Shaftesbury.

Or take Zinzendorf, with his passion for missionary work ; and think again how the

Spirit of God wrought through him and others, accentuating the call and need of the world, and creating widespread Missionary passion throughout the Church.

When the Spirit of God in the Church brings the truth to light, it works intuitively in the Christian, but it works with conviction in the unsaved. There is nothing that the world needs so much to-day as the conviction of sin. The mistake with so many of us is that we do not distinguish between the work of conscience, which deals with law, and the work of the Holy Spirit, which deals with Christ. If once more the world is to be convicted of sin, righteousness, and judgment, it must be because the Church once more, empowered by the Holy Spirit, shall deal with the great facts and truths that are gathered up in Jesus Christ. "He will convict the world of sin, because they believe not on Me." It is the Son-question which is at stake. "Of righteousness, because I go to the Father, and ye see Me no more." As Joseph sent to his father the wagons to prove that he was alive, so Jesus has sent the Holy Spirit, and the Holy Spirit witnesses that He is living yonder beyond the veil.



“Of judgment, because the prince of this world is judged.” He met more than his match at Calvary, and his influence has been broken by the Cross. The one business of the Church is to lift up Jesus Christ, and to let the Holy Spirit have the opportunity to convict men of sin through the revelation of Christ.

The question for us, therefore, is as to our own attitude to the Holy Spirit. As we advance in the divine life we shall be drawn away from the use of commentaries, and even the use of holy books of devotion, and brought back to the Scripture. When we open the Bible for private consideration and communion we shall ask the Holy Spirit to help us to see the reality which is behind the Book. In preaching, we have simply to bear witness to the great fact of Christ, Who is behind the Book. It is the witness of the Holy Ghost to the Living Christ, on the one hand, and to the historical record of Christ, on the other, which compels men to recognize that the truth which we are announcing is essential, necessary, and universal. We must carry with us the teaching of Christ, the consciousness of the living Christ ; and the

heart of man will awake to know and recognize the truth, will seek and find it through conviction, conversion, regeneration, and salvation.

Now, therefore, if that is all true, two things arise, and with these I close. Firstly, the more we speak God's truth—humbly, reverently, with the consciousness of the Holy Spirit being with us, endorsing, confirming, and enforcing it—the more likely our ministry will prosper. You remember that wonderful word: "I heard a voice from Heaven saying unto me, Write, Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth: *Yea*, saith the Spirit." We need the "Yea" of the Spirit as we preach. We need the affirmation of the Holy Spirit to enforce every sentence we utter in power. We shall never have the result we desire apart from the demonstration of the Holy Spirit. When we say: "He died," He must corroborate it. When we say: "He rose," the Holy Spirit must add: "He was raised by My power from the Cross." When we say: "He lives," the Holy Spirit must say also in the heart of our hearers: "He does live, and I am One with Him." Everything we say, therefore,

should be confirmed and accentuated by the Spirit.

The other thing is equally true. If a man is to have that affirmation of the Spirit, then he must walk with the Spirit, he must be filled with the Spirit. If I put my hand against an open window in this church I should find the outer air endeavouring to enter by every aperture. I believe the Holy Spirit is always trying to get into the hearts of men ; in the case of Samson, or Gideon, by a very narrow slit ; in our case by an open window. The question for every minister and every Christian worker is this : Have I opened every window ? Am I saturated with the Spirit ? Do I know what it is to be empowered by Him. In an hotel in Norway there was a little child who made the hotel almost unbearable for the company gathered there by always playing one poor ditty with one finger upon the piano. She emptied the *salon* every time she approached the musical instrument. Presently one of the finest organists in Norway came to the hotel, and when the child began her broken chords he sat down beside her, and for every note that she struck he played chords of the most

exquisite music, as if they had been caught from angels' harps. The guests stood entranced till the two had completed their strange and unwonted duet. You and I resemble that child. We have but one note, and often fail, and make sad discords ; but the Holy Spirit lays His hands upon the chords of the human heart, and whilst we reach the outward ear, He accompanies by regenerating appeals that transform characters and lives. Such is His relation and witness to Fundamental Truth.

## SCEPTICISM AND MORALITY

BY THE REV. PREBENDARY A. W. GOUGH, M.A.

OUR subject is Creative Christianity. And the Challenge of the Situation, as addressed to Creative Christianity, and to us who know something of Creative Christianity, has special reference to Scepticism and Morality. I would emphasize the fact that we are here about Creative Christianity. There was a newspaper extract sent me this morning, and it said that we were gathered in defence of Genesis. But I think Genesis is able to defend itself, and if it should seem to some to be in need of defence, I understand that a very excellent defence was offered in this church last night. But really our business is not very much defensive. Things that are alive, as institutions or ideas, do not need to think much about defence. It is the things that are weak, that are wanting

in life, that have to argue much and prepare much concerning defence.

And yet I am quite content to go back to the Book of Genesis. I am quite content to follow in the steps of the Dean, to go but a little way into the Book of Genesis, even to the scene of the Garden, and there find a text, a starting-point—for I never very exactly dare to prepare anything that I may not be called upon to speak about—which God may lead us along—and using perhaps some of the few notes that I see before me—into an understanding and appreciation of this duty which comes upon us to realize the creative power of Christianity, as we face the facts of immorality and scepticism to-day.

You remember the scene in the Garden. There, in that temptation picture to us, is the very thing that we are concerned with this afternoon. "Hath God said ye shall not eat of every tree that is in the garden? Ye shall eat of every tree but that tree in the midst of the garden, and God hath said if ye eat of that ye shall surely die. Is that so? Is it a good gift? It is good for food, and a thing to be desired to make you wise.

Eat of it.” The great fact of morality, and practically the great fact of religion, is this—that they are predominantly concerned with human welfare; not human *pleasure*, but human *welfare*. Morality is just really human welfare. The Christian religion in practice is a religion that is compassing and developing human welfare. Morality I would describe as love and justice in human relations. And the Christian religion, in its teaching of men as to how they bear themselves towards one another, is just the same; it is love and justice in human relations. Through them men rise to glorify God. They cannot really be just and loving in human relations apart from God. So I say you will need the whole of religion if you respond to Christian teaching concerning morality. What endangers morality, and what assails religion to-day, is not some difficulty besetting the intelligence. It is human greed and selfishness, more than anything else, that threaten both the religion and the morality of Christianity. They are threatening to destroy the things that God loves, so far as His revelation is vouchsafed to us to know what He chiefly loves above everything else, namely, human welfare. It



is not in the somewhat dry coldness of theology that we consider this matter. We consider it as God's warm interest in our human welfare ; nothing less than that. As the chairman said to us a moment ago, it is very largely a question of values, a question of realizing the value of our Christian morality and of our Christian religion.

Values are in a terribly disturbed condition everywhere to-day. There are all sorts of values. You hardly know what kind of moral price to put upon anything to-day that will secure general approval and consent. Values of all sorts are being upset, and among them those values that belong to human and Christian morality. What are the things that seem to be the most worth, the most privileged, in the general life of society to-day ? You know they are not really the most valuable things. It is not the men of greatest service to the community who expect to be most privileged to-day. We have exalted the things that are of little worth in the community. We have almost inculcated or accepted the doctrine that that which is particularly valuable is that which is especially weak. We have nearly

gone to the length of putting the under-dog upon the throne and letting him dictate to the community. With such a community as is capable of accepting such doctrine as that, it is not strange that all the moral values should seem to be at sea. Or else they are to be battled for. They seem to have no dignified, certain resting-place in the flux and upset of opinion and belief.

You must get down to the region of the emotions in regard to all these matters. If scepticism, or questions concerning morals, were merely academic, it would not be very serious ; it would have a certain seriousness, but for the moment it would not be immediately tremendously serious as the case is with us to-day. It is the fact that to-day's scepticism is emotional, and to-day's immorality is enthusiastic, that makes the seriousness of the situation. Some people—not perhaps within the walls of this church, but elsewhere—might object to the coupling of scepticism with immorality. I remember very well, in the days when I was at Oxford, how some of the best men I knew were men who, at any rate for the moment, had discredited Christian belief ; and if I had said to them that their

moral behaviour was going to be undone because they had put their Christian belief on one side, they would have been indignant with me. And yet, what is the truth regarding all this? Is there not a deep connection between morality and religion? It is quite true that when a tree is hewed down before the springing of the sap, leaves will come out in the following spring. But that does not prove that in the year following there will be leaves growing. Take away religion and the determining power of morality is gone, and the reproductive power of morality is gone. Scepticism in those days was not very emotional. It was still the materialistic period. By the way, Dr. Wace was at the time doing excellent work by his articles in the *Nineteenth Century*, in his controversy with Huxley. In those days people believed that men could live quite moral lives, though they had nothing more inspiring to think about than an endless stream of natural phenomena. But the days have got more exacting, more warm, more impulsive since then. To-day that which men are going to entertain and be kept by is not something that is cold; it is something that must lay hold of their

emotions. You know very well that to-day unbelief is very emotional indeed. In fact, I fear that it has often a great deal more rapture than true religion. You may listen to much warmer addresses delivered in the Parks by men who are trying to tear the Christian religion to pieces, than from the men who are advertising and recommending the religion of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. It is all wrong. The people to-day who are out for destruction seem to have more animation in them than the people who hold in charge the treasure of the Christian belief and profess an undying service to Christ Who died for them and lives again. It is a most formidable fact that the destructive things to-day seem to be the most energetic, and not only the most energetic, but they attract the most attention. They are the best advertised. A man who says something perfectly true and on the right side, who makes a statement that you might approve of, and that England might be the better for listening to, gets little advertisement. But the man who is out for destruction, who may be a person of no singular gifts, but who is on the popular side for the moment, who is on

the side of evil—anything he utters seems to have electric vigour, and it passes all over the world. Let some public man behave ill, and the whole world presently has the news flaunted in its eyes. Let a man speak lightly or mischievously of England, or of Christ, and if he be a public person, behold, it is known the world over by next morning that this thing has been done. There is a terrible advertisement given to-day to the things that are evil. I say again, they seem to be on the popular side.

But they are not on the winning side. The fact of the matter is that we who are Christians have largely forgotten that Christianity is creative. We have taken it so much by tradition. We are so very full of a sense of sobriety in our religious life. We are almost pathetically anxious not to make mistakes. We have lost the fervour and swing which carried the Christian Church as a conquering power over the mighty fabric of the old Pagan world. You know that Christianity is a constantly creative power. In a world that needs so much that is new and living as the world of to-day, it is able to make all things new—not just by taking the old

phrases, the old catch-words, the old shibboleths, as though there were something magical about them ; but just by a fresh receiving of the Spirit, the Spirit that is able to take hold of the world and make it the kingdom of our Lord and of His Christ. Whatever may have been happening, whatever disillusionings and change may have swept over the fabric of society, a new life will be built up not by some halting, careful policy of construction, but as the result of that which the Church always should have at its disposal—the inspiration which comes by thinking God's thoughts and seeing what God wants to have done. That is our position to-day. It is a kingdom we are out for. But we do not behave as though we were out for a kingdom. We are too modest, we are much too mild, far too careful, and we trip from being careful into being troubled.

Realize how splendid is the opportunity of the Church of God to-day. There is the shout of the King amongst us, if only we would open the ears of faith to hear it ; and the glorious banners of God are being led forward if we would only have the eye of faith to see and to follow.

Now really the Christian religion is, as I started by saying, not mainly a defensive business. It is meant for the offensive. The Christian religion is meant to be on the move forward. That is what it is for, and when it is doing that, it has very little need to be careful about those things that the Churches and Congresses and Conventions exercise their thoughts so much about. The real armour of the Christian Church is the "armour of light," that strength of which we were reminded a moment ago, that is intended to fill us. The real trouble with us to-day is, that we have very little overplus of life, if I may so put it, in ordinary Church life, very little of what you may call overflowing life. Really when bodies of Christians gather together to perceive and know what things they ought to do, and to pray for grace and power to fulfil the same—I do not want to speak bitterly, but they are sometimes rather like a Company that really believes it is bankrupt, but tries to hide its unsatisfactory condition by clamouring for extension of business and for some fresh capital.

We are intended to have enough life to do



God's business. There is in the Church of God enough life for the transaction of the business of God. If we were to try to face the fact presented to us to-day by scepticism, I would say, the way to meet scepticism is by a demonstration of the Spirit of power. The Church that is full of the health and life that comes to us through daily contact with the living Christ—that Church knows how to meet scepticism. It does not meet it chiefly by argument. Certainly it is not afraid of science. What can science do to hurt the truth that is in Jesus? Can any fact be shot to us from the stars, or be dug out of the clod, that is going to imperil the Christian truth? Really our Christianity stands rebuked if we are afraid that one part of God's truth is going to upset another part. Of course, you may so study the stars as though there were nothing but stars to think about, and so brood over the clod as though there were nothing more than clod; thereby losing all proportion, your Christian religion and morality afterwards may be upset. But there is not the full truth in the stars, nor the full truth in the clod. We need not be in the smallest degree afraid of science.

It is not science that makes sceptics. It is the heart that is empty of the Divine love, it is the mind that has lost contact with the Divine Spirit, that is cut off from inspiration and faith by something new, perhaps, that turns to scepticism ; it is the heart that is broken and has not known the love of Christ, that turns to scepticism. Men do not turn to scepticism because of their studies, but because of the state of their hearts. That is the source of it, that is where it comes from. But the heart that is warmed with the Divine love can face the facts of the Divine revelation anywhere, and it is not upset. We need not be afraid of the stars or of the clod ; but men may think too much of these things. The Church may think too much about them ; the Church may think too much about material things. It may get back into the wilderness in these troubled times, and being confronted by the tempter it may yield to the temptation and preach too much about " bread," for example, and teach men that a man's life does consist in the abundance of the things that he possesses. It may teach a man that the great object in life is to get a something that he calls justice, in the neglect

of what the chairman has been reminding us of concerning duty. It may preach its economic determinism; it may think to make the Church popular by doing it. It may hold its conferences and meetings. Religious Leaders may meet and put forth doctrines and views, as the Prime Minister was saying the other day, concerning things that they very imperfectly understand, but which they think will be popular as they present them. If they do that, then indeed these men may be weakening the power of the testimony of the Christian Church; they may be taking the Christian Church away from its great office. While it belongs to the Church to deal with open eyes, and constantly, with conditions of all sorts, yet for the Church to go down to preach that it is written that man shall live chiefly by "bread," and that the Church's chief business is to deal with those things that effect great economic changes—for the Church to do this is to weaken her spiritual power, to weaken just what is wanted to deal with immorality and scepticism alike. We are gathered here in this house of God to seek for help and guidance from God. Let us ask Him to give us some

of His Own view concerning the values that are values in His sight.

Have not we largely in the Christian Church lost Christ's sense of values? Is not that the trouble? Read over the Old Story again, and see what it was that Jesus Christ valued. He valued everything that was really human. There is the way in which scepticism is overturned, and immorality is put to nought—by teaching the real value of the real human things. When He went among publicans and sinners, or whatever sort or condition of people He went among, He was always looking for the human things. He loved the really human things. He could see them somewhere in a deeply soiled life, and sometimes in most stupid people who were erring and going astray from the right way like lost sheep. He was always looking out for that which He could build upon, and establish fellowship with, and use. He saw it in the golden, unbound locks of the poor Magdalene, as she plied her trade in the city by the Galilean lake. He saw under her sinning something that was capable of redemption, something that He could work with, something that He could love, something that He

could look upon with His Divine eyes and see as a thing nobler than anything that was respectable—capacity for a new life, and abandonment to the will of God. He saw it in broken people everywhere that yet were human and were not tied up with scribes and Pharisees against love and freshness and redemption. He saw it and always He welcomed it. He would do no mighty works unless He found somewhat of this thing. Sometimes He called it faith, and sometimes it was love, but it was always that which was human and which He could make blessed use of. He sought for life and strength among those poor and ailing people, and He turned those great loving eyes of His often, it seemed, away from their defects to that in them that He loved. There is the quest of Jesus Christ, there is the secret of the morality of the Christian religion. It lays hold of the things that God loves and values, and it finds them oftentimes in those that seem weak and those that have sinned much. It finds that which God can love and God can use.

Therefore, to-day let the Church go back to the old method of redemption, go back

to the old realization of love and of life. Let it see with the eyes of Jesus Christ this England that can do so much that He would have done, and that needs so much that He should do great things for it. Look upon this England, look upon these Churches, many of them starving for lack of life, tied up in respectable conventions, with no realization that God is speaking still to-day by the mouth of His holy, humble prophets, as He has done since the world began. Let the Church listen to what He is saying, let it arise to do His will, and there shall not fail to come forth in the Church of God a power that shall overthrow those deadly dangers that beset us, and set a new song in our mouth, even thanksgiving to our God, that shall be echoed back from Heaven itself with a song as sweet as that pictured in the great parable of redemption, where the angels of Heaven rejoice over repentant sinners. The angels rejoice over repentant sinners, but they would rejoice yet more over a re-awakened Church, because it had got a new life from Christ beating through its heart.

# LIBERALISM AND THEOLOGY

BY THE REV. R. C. GILLIE, M.A.

I SHOULD like to think that every one of you feels to some extent the burden of personal evangelism ; that in these days of restlessness and wistfulness you feel that to some extent you have to be a witness to what we call Creative Christianity, the Christianity that achieves things, that re-makes, that transforms, that gives life, that delivers. If you are attempting in any degree this mission of personal evangelism, it is quite certain that you will find a number of people who reject your message largely on the score that it is old-fashioned, or perhaps on the plea that they are busy thinking things out. One has to recognize that in the religious world, specially in the Christian world, there are two movements, two schools, two generations. There is the movement that seeks



chiefly to keep the past upon its throne ; and there is the movement that seeks chiefly to meet the challenge of the future. There is the school that is most busy with protecting what has been possessed ; and there is the other school that is most anxious to go out and possess what is as yet undiscovered. There is the generation that has its face, on the whole, to the past ; and there is the generation that has its face, on the whole, to the future. People are apt to choose the kind of name that favours their situation. People who are inclined to look upon preachers of the Evangelical conviction with some disfavour are inclined to call these two movements or generations, on the one side Orthodox, and on the other Liberal ; on the one side Evangelical, and on the other Progressive. If one were manœuvring for position, one might challenge at least some of these terms. But it really does not matter what they are called, as long as one sees clearly that there are these two schools, movements, generations within what we call Christianity. This title is intended to suggest that we should consider how far the Liberal movement may have helped Christianity, whether we have any

sympathy with it, how far it endangers the citadels of the very heart of the Faith.

I want to do a very simple thing this afternoon. I want, first, to point out to you four particulars in which there is common ground between the two movements; and then I want to point out four great convictions which to us are central and must be set forth, which we think have to a considerable extent been beclouded, if not endangered, by what we call Liberalism in thought. I am trying to be clear if I fail in everything else, so that you will be able to carry away in your minds what will help you to a firm position as you give yourselves to the service of personal Evangelism, and aim for a clearer pronouncement and stronger reaffirmation of Creative Christianity.

There are four particulars in which there is really no conflict between these two schools or movements. The first is this: That thought has a right to its place in the Christian religion. We don't forbid the mind to do its work there. We have to remember that the great ancient command which our Lord took up and made a command of His own, was not only, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy

God with thy heart," but "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with thy mind." It is perfectly right that thought should play about the great religious truths, and that we should seek to enter into and express them, and re-express them. I dare to say that perhaps no greater service could be done for Christ and for the cause of the Gospel than if some man could be found to-day who would re-state, in terms that the modern mind could understand and quickly grasp, what St. Paul meant by Justification by Faith. The phrase has become old, unattractive, meaningless to many people. God give us such power of thought that we may be able to re-state it to grip the modern mind. First of all, then, we agree in this particular—that the mind has rights in religion. It has more than rights ; it has duties.

The second thing we agree about is, that there is possibility of advance in the apprehension of God's truth. It is possible for Theology to progress. Many people are afraid when one says this. They feel that one suggests that there are to be additions to the Revelation which God has made. Our Lord sums up in Himself the unsearchable riches ;

“ the treasures of wisdom and knowledge ” are in Him. I am not suggesting for a moment that the revelation which is in Him can be added to or can be increased. But you remember the noble words of that great inspirer of the Pilgrim Fathers as they went forth on their voyage : “ The Lord has more truth and light yet to break forth out of His Holy Word.” We accept the position of those who in many things differ from us, when we say, “ Yes, we may hope for progression of thought. God has more truth and light to break forth from His Holy Word.”

The third thing we agree about is, That all truth will in the end be found to agree together. The truth of Science, the truth of Philosophy, and the truth of Religion will all in the end agree. Therefore, when some new truth emerges on the horizon of Science or Philosophy, which seems to contradict some deep-seated conviction, we wait patiently ; we are not going to throw away our conviction, or re-state our conviction at once. Because the centuries have seen many strange transformations. Spencerian philosophy, less than fifty years ago, was in its hey-day. Now it is on the dust-heap. Alas ; some

people allowed that philosophy to drive them from their Christian Evangelical convictions ; and, behold, to-day they are proved as foolish as that philosophy has been proved imperfect. But we do hold the position that all truth must agree together, and we look for an agreement, not for antagonism.

The fourth particular on which we get agreement is, That it is right, when you have got the truth, to state it clearly and strongly and authoritatively. In fact, we quite object to stampede from dogma, in the panic-stricken way characteristic of some moderns. Dogma is simply a crystallized statement of religious truth. There are dogmas also in Science, crystallized statements of scientific observation ; and dogmas in Morality, crystallized statements of moral consciousness. We are not prepared to go about speaking our religious convictions in an uncertain, indefinite way. There are certain things so clear and important that they ought to be stated clearly and unmistakably, and if you care to call that dogma, call it so. But I am perfectly sure that none who really are right-minded will object to this assertion—that it is right for religious truth to be set forward clearly

and definitely, where it is seen with clearness and definiteness.

I believe it is important that Evangelical Christians should recognize these things, so that they may be able to show to others that whilst they have the steadfast mind they have not the shut mind ; and, as I am constantly saying to people at the same time, we want to show to others that though we have the open mind we have not the loose mind. The desideratum for just thinking and conviction is that we should have both the steadfast and the open mind. " Prove (or try) all things "—that is " the open mind." " Hold fast that which is good "—that is the steadfast mind.

Well now, what are we afraid of in this Liberal movement as it affects theology, which is the ordered thinking of religion? We reply boldly, frankly, we are afraid of this : " That you bring religion to people rather as thinkers and philosophers and scholars, than as sinners. For us religion's message is, first of all, to sinners, people in need. Further, we are afraid that the very citadels of the faith, which are the cities of refuge of religious truth, are being weakened by

you. You do not exactly dismantle them, but you weaken them, and therefore your Christianity has not these elements of security and vitality which reveal its power."

So I go on to mention in a perfectly simple way the four things that are to me central and supreme in our message, if it is to be a message of creative power. The first is this: That God is personal, and anything that in any degree tends to make Him appear to be a tendency, a vague influence, stabs at the heart of true religion. God is personal and able, therefore, to come into contact with the creatures that He has made like Him, men and women who are persons also. If anyone says that God in His infinitude is much more than personal, I am quite willing to give them the term Super-personal. I am not saying that personality exhausts God, but it expresses God. *Personality* enables us to say that God therefore has a character, He has a purpose, and He has a heart. More than that, we are brought to take the right view of miracle, if we are believing in God as personality. What is the Christian value of miracle? That it emphasizes the possibility everywhere, and at all times, of God reaching to the persons



He has made, coming close to them. We do not believe that God has made the world and shut Himself out of it. We do not believe that God has made the world and shut Himself into it. The only thing in the world that can shut God out is the will of man. Therefore we say, as our Lord said: "The Father, without whom not a sparrow falls to the ground." He is personal. His life is able to reach everywhere, able to touch everything. If you dig deep enough you will find at the back of some people's minds who have lost any religious conviction they ever had, that they had never got to that initial stage of clearly accepting God as a great Person. I like this definition of Christianity—a religion of the intercourse of persons, of the intercourse of the high supreme Personality with this poor simple personality.

In the second place we go on to say a second elementary thing, but a thing that looks difficult to a good many people, viz., That this personal God has revealed Himself. Men were not left to grope and to make dim discoveries in this realm of knowledge of God. They were left to grope and to make discoveries in science and in various other

directions ; but in this they were not left to themselves. God has broken silence, God has gone out to make Himself known, God has unbared His heart and will. Therefore, it is for man to listen, to receive. Now that entirely determines your attitude. If you once recognize that God is the great Revealer and Unveiler, you come to Him with a humble, listening, alert heart. You are not on the quest as much as you are waiting, receptive. God has revealed Himself chiefly through personality, which is the highest range of life we know. Therefore God has sent us messages through persons—through imperfect persons first, through His inspired prophets, through His guided heroes, through His enlightened priests. All that revelation, spread over centuries and progressive, has been recorded for us. This revelation would have been an imperfect revelation had there not been a Perfect Personality in which it could be perfectly expressed. Therefore, finally, we have the Lord Christ, the perfect Man, and therefore the perfect revealer of God, and the perfect Man because God was in Him perfectly. So we are led up to the supreme Word of God—Jesus ; and we mark

a second central conviction of the Christian religion—God revealing Himself in His Son.

We come, in the third place, to the straightforward statement, That God has provided a remedy for sin. There was an historical moment in which the perfect Revealer became the complete Redeemer, and that historical moment was at the Cross, so swiftly followed by the Resurrection. We say to men that the Cross was God's final treatment of sin, as well as the blessed unveiling of His love for the sinner. All was done that needed to be done at the Cross, that sinful men and the worst of sinners might be welcomed home to the bosom of the Father. That was the greatest moment in history, but we do not deny that there has always been in God redeeming love. The Cross was in the heart of God as surely as the Cross was on the hill of Calvary. We do not say that any one theory exhausts the great fact; but we demand that the fact should be made central, should be kept undimmed, that nothing should be allowed to shadow or weaken it.

We notice quite distinctly a certain tendency in some minds to-day to proclaim the love of God as if it had no relation to the

Cross, as if the love of God somehow contradicted the full, deep doctrine of the Cross. I always say to people in that position, "Will you study whence these starry words, 'God is love,' came?" They are the brightest star in the firmament of the world of man's thought. How did they come to be there? Read the First Epistle of St. John, and you find that before he utters those sublime and simple words he is saying this: "If any man sin, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous: And He is the propitiation for our sins; and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world." And close alongside of that message, "God is love," in the same chapter, we have these words: "Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us, and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins." The man who by the grace of the Spirit of God proclaimed to us, "God is love," proclaimed it to us because of his experience of the Cross, his insight into the great sacrifice of Christ for sin.

To take one step further, our fourth conviction is that we have a Gospel for man, whatever be his need. We point out that

good advice is not the Gospel, that the best advice is not the Gospel. We are anxious to point out that a high ideal is not the Gospel, that the highest ideal that attracts you is not the Gospel, that a shining, perfect life is not the Gospel. The Gospel is the good news, that what you cannot do for yourself or gain for yourself has been done for you and gained for you. The Gospel comes with the message, that when you are nerveless, helpless, hopeless, there can be complete deliverance, real transformation. I suppose, our real criticism of those who sometimes claim to themselves the name of Liberal or Progressive in religion, is that they dim the Gospel. Often they do not proclaim the Gospel, and sometimes we wonder if they have any Gospel. To us it is central and culminating truth, the very heart of Christianity, that there is this glorious good news—God has revealed Himself in His Son, and has taken the Cross into His heart that there might be deliverance for men and women.

All theological thought we test by its attitude towards these four central facts. We test it too by its colour, by its warmth. We ask: Is it always attempting to minimize

statements, to explain them away and to keep them in the shadow, or to accept them in their fulness, largeness and marvellousness?

I have just two things to say in conclusion. There are two points, I believe, on which we may differ legitimately. While we have marked our partial agreement, as regards principles, with certain people, and set forth our four citadels of truth and cities of refuge, there are two things about which we may disagree. The first is this. Obviously, during the last fifty years there has been a great change of emphasis as regards method in Evangelical theology. We have moved away from emphasizing the plan of salvation to emphasizing the personality of the Saviour. I can remember as a boy being instructed in some book on the plan of salvation, and I must say, frankly, it did not help me. I am a saved man because I got a vision of the Saviour, and everything came to me through the contact of personalities—my poor, wretched, worthless personality in contact with that great, glorious, saving Personality. I do not say that we have lost nothing because the plan of salvation has, so to speak, fallen into obscurity. It would be a good thing to-day

if we could get fresh light and thought upon St. Paul's presentation of the plan of salvation. But we have to face the fact that there has been a change in Evangelical emphasis. I am not alarmed by the change. I am only anxious that whether we preach the plan of salvation, or the personality of the Saviour, it should be preached with the supreme conviction that the God who has given salvation changes not.

The other point on which there may be legitimate difference of opinion is concerning the full round of Christian truth. There was a time in the past when people thought that you could not have a safe Gospel unless all your circumference was clear. That is what is driving some men into the Church of Rome. I remember a striking incident told to me by a personal friend of a Church of England clergyman. The clergyman had been an old friend of Cardinal Newman's. After the Cardinal went into the Church of Rome they did not meet for twenty years. Then they met in a meeting at Birmingham, and their old love for each other leapt up. The Church of England clergyman said: "Newman, why did you leave us?" "Because I desired a



horizon to my theology." Everything had to be clear, you see ; no shadows, no gaps. Well, if you have got a circumference to your theology, and have got it all thought out and clear, thank God for it. But do recognize as your fellow-Christian a person who has got a centre, and is not disturbed about certain gaps in the circumference. The centre is Jesus Christ, the Son of God, the Saviour of men, in whom is all wealth, in whom is all power, to whom I can trust all my past, in whom all the future is secure ; and that is enough for me. If people feel that they cannot have security if they have not got a circumference to their theology, surely it is a profound mistake. It is your centre, what you rest on, that counts.

How are we then to sum up the situation ? We look forward, and we believe the time has come when the Liberalizing movement may rightly pause. We say there has been enough of reviewing the foundations, enough refutation of outworn doctrines, enough removal of limitations. Let us press forward now and proclaim the mastery of God, the mastery of God's transforming love. I believe we have many with us whom you might

scarcely expect to be with us. Just six months ago, in America, I was speaking to the Principal of an advanced Theological College, a man of great ardour of soul and devotion to truth, and he used these significant words: "Twenty years ago, what we were attempting here was chiefly to widen men who came to us too narrow. Now what we have to do is to stabilize men who come too insecure in their conviction." That is a great change in outlook. I want to put alongside it a remarkable sentence given us in the Second Epistle of St. John, which really sums up all I have got to say. The Authorized translation unfortunately misleads us. It says: "Whosoever transgresseth, and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ, hath not God." That is a mis-translation. The Revised Version says: "Whosoever *goeth onward* and abideth not in the teaching of Christ, hath not God: he that abideth in the teaching, the same hath both the Father and the Son." That is the motto for the right relation of progressive thought and fundamental Christianity. You are going forward. God bless you. You with your young mind, in particular, cannot help going

forward. Go forward, but abide in the teaching of Christ. It is the base of operations. If you are separated from it, the victory is lost and you are seriously in danger. "Whosoever goeth forward and abideth in the teaching of Christ, the same hath both the Father and the Son."

# THE POWER TO TRANSFORM THE INDIVIDUAL

BY THE REV. H. TYDEMAN CHILVERS

THE times call for reaffirmation of the fundamentals of our faith, and I furthermore believe that the Bible demands that reaffirmation from us. I maintain that the Word of God, the Bible, not only contains the fundamentals of our faith ; but the Bible, as a whole, and “ the Scripture cannot be broken,” is *the* fundamental of our faith. The Prime Minister, Mr. Lloyd George, said, in welcoming the Imperial Delegates, “ No progress can be made towards the rehabilitation of Europe, or the establishment of permanent peace in the world, except upon the basis of acceptance of Treaties and the enforcement of Treaties.” May I suggest to you that the progress of the Church of the Lord Jesus Christ depends upon her fidelity and her faithfulness to that

Sacred Volume, the revelation of God which He has entrusted unto her.

Our subject is "the response of that Revelation." The part allotted to me is "the power to transform the individual." May I remind you, in the first place, *that Revelation insists upon the need of the transformation of the individual.* Holy Scripture undertakes no demonstration of the reality of sin. In all its statements concerning sin, sin is pre-supposed as a fact which cannot be controverted or denied, challenged or obscured, and the Bible or the Revelation of God approaches man as a sinner, speaks to him as such, deals with him as such, prescribes for him and announces the provision of Divine grace for him as a sinner that is needing Divine transformation. The Fall is a reality. It is a great moral disaster. It is not merely a physical disease ; neither is it "a stage in the upward development of a finite being." The Bible emphatically states that the Fall is a step downwards and away from God, and thereby man is alienated from his Divine Maker. "Dead in trespasses and in sins," is the definition of the condition of man's soul. Sin has ruined him ; he is a ruin, and as

Campbell Morgan has said in one of his remarkable books, *The Crises of the Christ*, "man is a magnificent ruin," and if he, as a ruin, is magnificent, what must he have been when he came fresh from the hands of his Maker? As a ruin, then, he needs transformation, recovery, regeneration. Revelation lays bare the heart of man; it tells him what he is in himself. The moral law reveals sin in the light of the immaculate holiness of Almighty God, and man, by the light of God's law, sees sin as God would have him see it—in himself and around and about him—and is brought into a knowledge of a need of the transforming power of the revelation that makes known to him his personal and his individual need. One great feature of the Divine Revelation of God is this—that for what it discovers, reveals and makes known, it prescribes a remedy and announces a provision of grace which is always greater than the sin that is revealed by the light of Divine Revelation.

But while Revelation insists upon the need of transforming the individual, *it announces that provision of power, of Divine grace, that can transform the individual.* The *plan of salvation*—that is rather an old-fashioned

phrase, but it is very expressive—the plan of salvation, the scheme of redemption, they together are the grand conception of the Divine Mind. And God has laid bare His own heart towards man that needs this transforming grace and power in the scheme of redeeming love and blood and power. The power to transform the individual lies in a Divine Personality. “The Word was with God and the Word was God, and the Word was made flesh and tabernacled amongst us, and we beheld His glory, the glory of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth. The law was *given* by Moses, but grace and truth *came* by Jesus Christ.” Jesus Christ alone, in His Divine personality, is the Transformer of the sinful life. But while the power lies in a Divine personality, it also is found in the mediation of the Divine Person. He is the Daysman and Mediator between fallen man and a Holy God. As such He has laid His hands upon us both, and betwixt us effects a reconciliation and makes an abiding peace. But He does it by giving Himself “a ransom for many.” He offers Himself as a substitutionary vicarious sacrifice for sin and for sinners. The reconciliation



is made by the blood of His cross between fallen man and a Holy Divine Being, and peace has been made by the blood of the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. The transforming power of Heaven comes by the way of the death of the Redeemer.

“Upon a life I do not live,  
Upon a death I did not die ;  
On another’s life, another’s death  
I stake my whole eternity.”

Ah ! but Jesus Christ Who died is alive for evermore, alive to vindicate the claims that He made when He was despised and rejected of men. The grave is empty, the tomb has been vacated, and in the midst of the throne of mediatorial sovereignty is the triumphant and glorified Son of God ; and in Him is all power in Heaven and in earth, and by that power alone which He has manifested and brought to man by the Holy Spirit can we be transformed. The Holy Spirit, the Divine Paraclete, is the Quickener, the Comforter, the Revealer of Jesus Christ, bringing His saving knowledge and power to the man that is helpless and lost and ruined in his sin. Yes, the Revelation of God is a great challenge ;

the gauntlet is thrown down, and, accordingly, it says, "He that believeth in Jesus Christ hath everlasting life"; and every man that has dared to believe in Jesus Christ has been transformed by Him. Jesus Christ "breaks the power of cancelled sin." The sin that binds the human heart and life, the sin that hath brought man into bondage to all that is evil and wrong, is broken by the power of the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ which is made known to us in the Revelation of God, to which man's faith responds and his life becomes a witness to the power of God's own Holy Word to change his heart, to transform his life.

I shall never forget sitting in one of those mid-day services in the City Temple. I used frequently to hear Dr. Parker there, but on this particular morning John McNeill, the Scotch Evangelist, was preaching. I remember the text from which he preached. The Temple was filled from ceiling to floor, mostly with men, and his text was "What manner of man is this?" Soon after the service commenced a man came by the pew in which I was sitting. He was attracting everybody's attention. He came stamping

down the aisle. He was one of those men with a grimy face, with hair cropped short, with a choker round his neck—and a bull neck it was. His eyes were sunken and bloodshot, and his coat had about thirty brass buttons down the front of it. He made his way to just two pews in front of me, and there he sat, following the speaker as intently as anyone in the great audience, and joining in the hymns. But in the last hymn which John McNeill announced: "There is a Fountain filled with blood," I saw the man stand up; he opened his book, and he sang the first verse. Then, gradually, I saw at the second verse, the book go up in front of his face, hiding it from every one else. The tears were coursing down his cheeks as he sang:

"The dying thief rejoiced to see  
That Fountain in his day;  
And there have I, though vile as he,  
Washed all my sins away."

That simple sermon that morning, full of the power of God, which comes with the Revelation that He has given and always accompanies every true testimony that is borne to the cross of Jesus Christ, had evidently

entered his heart and stirred his emotion, and the dear fellow tried to hide his tears of penitence as he wept his way through that hymn. There is power in the Revelation to transform life.

That brings me to my third and last point. *The Revelation produces its own living witnesses to its power.* Every Christian living is a response or witness to the power of Divine revelation. He should be, and is, if walking in the life and light of the Spirit of God, a translation of the Scriptures. "He is begotten," says the apostle James, "by the word of truth, and becomes a kind of firstfruits." Christians are born of the Word of God, which is the immortal "seed that abideth for ever." The apostle Paul said of some Christians who had been born through his ministry into the experience of the love of God: "Ye are our epistles, read and known of all men." I know of no greater response to the Revelation of God than a man, or a woman, or a child that is living in the power of the risen Saviour, day by day, and week by week, and month by month, and daring to trust Him through evil and through good report. The apostle Paul says: "I am

not ashamed of the Gospel of Christ, which is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth, to the Jew first, and also to the Greek." "The Gospel that I preach, and of which I am not ashamed, is the power of God," he says, to meet the needs, to transform, to cleanse, to regenerate by the Holy Ghost lives distorted, broken, battered by sin and iniquity. What man needs is to be regenerated by the Spirit of God, and then the reformation of his whole life necessarily follows. When the mainspring of his being is put in order, then the hands and feet and every other part of his manhood move accordingly.

I remember hearing Dr. Jowett tell a story that abides with me. He said there was a prize fighter who came within the grip of the Gospel of Jesus Christ and was converted. He met one of his old friends, and this friend said to him, "I hear you've been converted?" "Yes, that's true." "It's a pity you've got those scars all over your face, because anybody can see what you've been." "Ah, but they can see what I *am*, for these scars are windows through which the grace of God shines." Dear men and women, sin may

leave its marks, but when Christ comes to the life of the sinner, He enables him to triumph over the sin that has left its mark; and while the mark declares what I *have been*, my present life declares what I *am*, and thus becomes a witness to the power of the Revelation of Almighty God. What a response is this! I remember that one of the last things my mother put in my trunk was a Bible. I came to this great city, and when I opened that trunk at night, the first thing I saw was that Bible. I opened its fly-leaf, and covering that fly-leaf was this: "My son, if sinners entice thee, consent thou not"; and from that moment that boy began to pray as he had never prayed before. One day, standing at the door of temptation, surrounded by other young fellows who were luring one away, that text came back with all its power: "My son, if sinners entice thee, consent thou not." Whatever you may think of Revelation, I am bound to testify to its power of transforming the human life. Yes, we may go, like the Prophet Ezekiel, into the valley of dry bones, and see human lives distracted, distressed, broken, battered by sin, and like that old-time prophet and

seer, we may stand in the midst of the valley of death, and prophesy, and the power of the prophecy shall fall upon the dead bones until they stand a great army, and the breath of God shall come into them, and that army shall testify that they live by the power of the prophecy that came through the prophet from God.

London is like a valley of dead bones. We ministers and Churches are confronted with problems on the right and on the left. We turn to a thousand and one things to try and solve the problems, but they remain. We form our committees and, instead of staying in our studies and seeking to know more of the power of Revelation, we spend a lot of time on committees *about* problems. This Book declares that it is a remedy for every problem ; it declares and announces an Evangel which claims to be all-sufficient for the ills and sins of men. Every life saved by grace and brought to trust in the finished work of Jesus Christ becomes a response and a witness to the power of the Revelation of God. It has a power to transform ; it has not lost its power. It abides the same, like its Maker ; it is for yesterday, to-day and for



ever. God help us to trust it and dare to believe in its power to transform the life that is most torn, rent and broken, and to bring it into a state of pardon, justified, amended, and held by the power that comes through Revelation.

I close with this :

“ I came to Jesus as I was, weary and worn and sad ;  
I found in Him a resting place, and He has made me  
glad.”

That is my testimony to the Power of the Revelation to transform.

# THE POWER TO TRANSFORM SOCIETY

BY THE REV. DR. J. D. JONES

WE have been told, again and again, till it has become almost a platitude, that we are living in a time of intense and extreme crisis. But I would have you remember for your comfort and good hope that this is not the first crisis through which the Christian Church has had to pass. The Church is familiar with crises. She has passed through one after another, and I have not the smallest doubt that they were crises which seemed just as formidable to those who had to face them as the present crisis appears to us. I was very interested the other day, when glancing through one of my friend Silvester Horne's manuscript sermons, to find him talking in it about some "unparalleled crisis," and saying that the Church had never been called upon before

to face so menacing a condition of things. I do not know what the particular crisis was Horne had in mind. All I do know is that the Church of Christ survived it. You and I, however, may feel that what Horne said about the happenings of twenty years ago may with greater exactness and truth be said about the situation by which we are confronted to-day. I believe that is so. The world has been turned literally upside-down by the War. The very foundations of Society are being removed. Our civilization, in which we were born and bred, is crumbling before our eyes. We are living in a transition stage, between two worlds, one dead, the other waiting to be born ; and transition times are proverbially dangerous times. The old faiths and sanctions which used to restrain men and hold society together are largely gone ; and new faiths and new sanctions have not yet come to take their place. The question is whether the Christian Church with its Gospel is equal to the task of laying hold of this broken and shattered world and building it up again into a new and fairer society which shall be more like that city of God, which is the object of our hope and the goal of our

desire. Those of us gathered here this evening are here to say that we believe it is. We believe the Christian faith contains in it the promise of a better world. We believe that it is adequate ; I will go further and say, we believe that it alone is adequate to meet the claims and urgent needs of this stricken world of ours. We do not believe that without reason.

To begin with—and I say this especially to the younger folk present—we have got history on our side. Dean Church, in one of his chapters in his *Gifts of Civilization*, mentions this as one of the characteristics of Christianity—a certain power of recuperation that it possesses. It is constantly rising into newness of life and power. With every new demand it renews its strength. The old Pagan religions which Christianity displaced had no such power. They were helpless in face of the world's growing knowledge and increasing need. They had not it in them to give any sort of guidance and assistance, and so they died. They died because they were inadequate and useless. But with every great emergency in the history of the world Christianity has been, so to speak, new-born,

and has given fresh and amazing proofs of its power. It has adapted itself to new situations as they have arisen, and demonstrated its ability to deal with the ever-changing needs of this very changeful world.

Do you want illustrations of that truth? Consider what Christianity did for the world that had been laid in ruins by the fall of Rome. Consider what it did for Europe,—stirred to its depths by the advent of the new learning,—by the Protestant Reformation of the sixteenth century. Consider what it did for England by the Evangelical Revival. If you want further illustrations, consider what it has done in the past fifty years in face of the challenge of criticism and Natural Science. In every case Christianity has had a kind of new birth, a recrudescence of power, and in each case has given convincing proof of its adequacy to meet new situations as they arise. It is not simply that Christianity has survived; it is not simply that the word of the Old Book has come true, that “no weapon formed against her has prospered”; it is not simply that “the gates of hell have not been able to prevail” against the Church.

The Church has in each case taken the new situation in hand, it has commanded it, it has brought its Gospel to bear upon it, and has used it to bring the kingdom of God nearer. I bid you remember that in these tremendous days in the midst of which we live. The best cure for panic is a course of history. The story of the way in which the Christian Church and the Christian Gospel have proved themselves able to deal with the needs of one generation after another, to master one crisis and emergency after another, as they have arisen, ought to make us buoyantly confident that in our faith we have got the power which can create out of the chaos and peril of our present time a fairer and happier world.

It is with the power of our faith to transform society that I have specially to deal. You will notice that my subject comes quite fittingly after Mr. Chilvers' subject—the power of the Gospel to transform the individual. To treat them in any other order would be, if you will pardon a homely simile, to put the cart before the horse. In the long run, I believe, the transformation of society can only come through the transformation of the

individual. The new world can only be brought to pass through the new man. I think, if I may be allowed to say so, that that is what vitiates a great many of the social schemes to which in these days men give their adherence. They neglect the individual; they propose to create a new society while leaving men and women unchanged. It is a desperate and absolutely hopeless endeavour. Change of environment and material condition will never give us the happy England that we desire to see, so long as men and women remain greedy and selfish and lustful. It was a significant thing that in one of the quarterlies, some years ago, Mr. and Mrs. Sidney Webb, than whom none have laboured more assiduously for the amelioration of conditions, should have written an article entitled "The Need for a New Heart." It is the bottom and fundamental need. We are simply crying for the moon when we cry for a happier and fairer order, if we do not recognize, first of all, the need for new hearts. The primary necessity for the transformation of society is the conversion of the individual. That old word which our Lord spoke has been underlined and emphasized by the events of



recent years—"Except a man be born again he cannot see the kingdom of God."

Having said that, I want to go on to say that the New Testament quite clearly contemplates more than the salvation of the individual, the snatching of men and women like brands from the burning. It contemplates also the creation of a redeemed society. The most frequent theme of our Lord's speech was the kingdom of God. While I do not pretend that any one definition exhausts all the wealthy content of that term, this much may be quite confidently said about it—that it embraces the idea of a society in which God's will shall be done. And that redeemed society must not be postponed to the next world. What our Lord taught us to pray was: "Thy kingdom come; Thy will be done *in earth*, as it is in heaven." Our Lord contemplated a redeemed society, He contemplated a regenerated social order, He saw the kingdoms of this world changed into the kingdoms of God and of His Christ.

I do not know whether you will agree with what I am now going to say. I take it that we call ourselves Evangelicals. I most certainly call myself one, because I see no hope

for the world or for the individual except in the Evangel. I wonder, however, sometimes whether we Evangelicals have slurred over or ignored the social aspect of our faith. Of course it is impossible to over-emphasize the need for individual redemption. But it is possible so to concentrate on the individual redemption as to forget that the New Testament ideal is that *of a redeemed individual in a redeemed society*. I sometimes indeed wonder whether a man can be completely and entirely saved apart from the salvation of society. Can a man be a complete Christian anywhere except in a Christian world? Can we live the complete Christian life in a society which is un-Christian in its very fabric? Is not that why so many people find almost insuperable difficulty in the full application of Christian principles say, for example, to business, in the present condition of things? It is easy enough to live the conventional Christian life. But suppose a man determined he would rigorously carry out all the principles of Christ's teaching, I want to know, could he carry on at all? Is not that what Lewis Morris meant when he called the precepts of the Sermon on the Mount the

“ sweet, impossible precepts ” ? Did not that lie at the bottom of Archbishop Magee’s remark that the principles of the Sermon on the Mount were never meant to be practised ? What they were really saying was that the out-and-out, complete, absolutely Christian life is difficult to the point of impossibility, society being what it is. Which again amounts to this, that a man can only be really and completely saved in a saved society. That was why Jesus, while insisting on the absolute need of the new birth, had also so much to say about “ the kingdom of God.” He held the balance true. The individual and the kingdom were both in His mind and upon His heart. But we are so apt to be partial and one-sided. If we see one aspect of truth clearly, we are apt to be blind to the other and complementary aspect. If we see the importance of the individual, we are apt to minimize the importance of Society, and vice versa. If we want to follow Christ’s method, however, we shall emphasize both. While preaching the necessity of individual salvation, we shall preach also the necessity of a redeemed society ; and while preaching the necessity of a redeemed society, we shall

not forget that it can only come through the redeemed individual. Those two aspects act and react upon one another. I have said that society cannot be saved apart from the salvation of the individual; but the social conditions under which an individual lives may make his salvation either easy or difficult. Of course, with God nothing is impossible. But still, did not General Booth say that there were children who were not so much born as damned into the world? The conditions under which they lived never gave them a chance and made a moral life almost impossible. We cannot be inert and heedless in face of these things—in face of the drink trade and the slum, and oppressive conditions of life. We are bound to do all that in us lies to improve social conditions in the interests of the moral redemption of the individual soul.

There is a social side to the Gospel message. It is perfectly true that Jesus did not deal directly with what we call social questions. He deliberately, indeed, eschewed them. When invited, for instance, to interfere in a family quarrel about property, He declined to be a judge or a divider. But while He

did not deal directly with such questions as the political rights of the Jews, the evil of slavery, the relations between employer and employed, He enunciated principles which have a most direct bearing upon these and other problems of the same kind. To talk of Jesus as if He were the predecessor of the modern Socialist is to caricature Him. But it is perfectly true that He propounded principles which have moved men down all the centuries to the work of social amelioration and reform. There are social implications in the Gospel, and they must not be ignored. I venture to say that when the story of these times comes to be written, one of the most valuable documents published of recent years will be found in the Report of the Inquiry by the Anglican Church into industrial and social conditions, and the bearing upon them of Christian principles. Its conclusions were far-reaching, and I do not hesitate to say that if the conclusions in that Report were carried out we should live in a changed world.

The method that the Church ought to adopt in dealing with social questions is open to debate. The subject has been brought into prominence again by a speech from our

Prime Minister. I do not know that his address is fairly open to all the criticisms levelled against it. But we must say quite frankly that our Gospel must be made to apply to every part of our social and public life. You cannot keep it in watertight compartments. I agree with the Prime Minister that it is not the Church's business to interfere in the details of disputes. But we have a right to say that political life and industrial life, the relations of Capital and Labour, must all be made subject to the law of Christ. Only by claiming everything for the rule of Christ can we get the new order and the better world. The New Testament contemplates a new order and gives us the pattern of it—an order characterized by unselfish and loving ministry on the part of the people, and an order therefore of peace and goodwill. We are all longing for that order to come. We want to see industrial peace in England, and such a peace amongst the nations of the world that the words will come true, "Men shall beat their swords into ploughshares, and their spears into pruning-hooks: nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more."

How is that going to come about? I see absolutely no chance for the redemption of society except in the Gospel of Jesus Christ and Him crucified. I am here to say that the only Leader and Commander of the people, who can bring them into a new world, is the Lord Jesus. The only chance lies in the substitution of service for self, and of love for rivalry; in other words, the lives and hearts of the people must be filled with the very spirit of our Lord Himself. The late War and our present industrial strife are all proofs of the failure of the old way of selfishness. It is about time we tried Jesus Christ. People assert sometimes that the five years of war were the final proof of the failure of Christianity. I know no more perverse interpretation of the situation than that. They were not the final proof of the failure of Christianity, but of the hopeless failure of education, of culture, of civilization and everything else put together, once you divorce them from Christianity. It was not Christ that failed. It was civilization that failed. I am old enough to remember the time, thirty years back, when people were told that by a process of natural evolution the world would



progress towards perfection by its own weight ; that education and culture and the advance of science would banish war. The late War has dashed that hope to atoms. There is no hope in culture, no hope in science, no hope in civilization. The only hope for the world is in the Cross which you and I believe in, which has done great things for us, and which can do equally great things for men and women everywhere. The world's hope is Jesus Christ.

Here is an extraordinary thing to which I wish to call your attention. Now is not the first time that people have dreamed of a better order of society. They have been dreaming of it for long centuries ; Plato, for instance, gives a picture of his idea of a just and happy social order. More than once attempts have been made to realize it. The French Revolution was such an attempt. The French Revolution started out to establish liberty, equality and fraternity for France. These three things have got to distinguish and characterize any society that is going to be peaceful and happy. But the French Revolution began its work by publicly repudiating God. With what result ? Instead of establishing liberty,

equality and fraternity, it made the streets of France and Paris run red with blood, and ended in the erection of the Napoleonic tyranny. You want more than a vision of a happy world ; you want some power that is going to translate that vision into fact. Once you cut yourself adrift from Christ and His Gospel you cut yourselves adrift from the only things that can translate your dreams into realities. But Christ can turn these dreams into realities. I have seen Him bridge gulfs of division. I attended some years ago a series of meetings in the United States. They were the most cosmopolitan meetings I was ever at. There were present Englishmen, Scotchmen, Irishmen, Welshmen, Canadians, Norwegians, Russians, Negroes, South Sea Islanders—in fact nearly every type of nationality. But we forgot all about our differences of nationality and speech, and simply realized that we were brothers together. There is only one place in the world where differences of that kind can be lost sight of and forgotten. We had all met together at the table of the Lord. There is no difference in Christ. “ There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither

male nor female ; for ye are all one in Christ Jesus."

We know that Jesus can do that kind of thing. When you consider the great improvements in the conditions of society that have taken place throughout the centuries, you will find Jesus Christ at the back of them all. When you examine the power behind all the movements for betterment of the past nineteen centuries, you will find that in every case Jesus Christ has been behind them. So much so that an American writer gives to a book in which he describes these ameliorative movements this title, *Gesta Christi*—"The doings of Christ." Jesus Christ has been at work all this time in human society bringing in these better conditions ; and He is going to be at work in the world to-morrow, and it is through Him, and through Him alone, that we can ever hope for a world in which peace and goodwill shall become realized facts of human life.

I believe in that not merely because I see the influence of Jesus Christ working in that way through every domain of human endeavour ; but I believe in it, and hope for it, because I know that Christ has the power

of re-making men. I here get back again to my first position—that it is useless hoping for a better society until you get better people to live in it. Get the new man, and the new man will soon make the new world, but you are never going to get the new world apart from the new man. Well, Jesus Christ can re-make men, He can so radically transform them that they shall become really new men. We know He can do it, for the simple reason that we have seen it done. I do not suppose we could go on with our preaching if we did not see it done sometimes. I do not see it done as often as I would like, but I see it done. Gipsy Smith was taking a mission in my place twenty years ago, and there came in to listen to him a drunken, profane man with a violent temper. When he came to the church he found it full; he could not get in, and he had to come and listen to me—I was preaching in the lecture-hall—a great disappointment, no doubt, to him. But, happily, God can use J. D. Jones just as well as Gipsy Smith, and He used me that night. That man wrote me a fortnight ago: “It is just twenty-one years ago since I first sat at Communion with you.” For

twenty-one years that man has lived the new life: for twenty-one years he has been an abstainer; for twenty-one years he has kept his tongue from evil; for twenty-one years he has been giving what strength and power he had to the work of trying to make other people better. I have seen Jesus radically transform men like that.

I go sometimes amongst the Methodists. I was at Hull not long since preaching an anniversary sermon at one of the great Central Halls there. At night there was a great public meeting. The speaking was great, the audience magnificent. But it was neither the speeches nor the audience that interested me that night, mainly. There was on my left a male-voice choir of forty men. I won't say much about it from the artistic point of view. Their music was robust; we will leave it at that; nevertheless, that choir was the most moving and pathetic thing in the whole meeting. Every man of that forty had been redeemed by the work of the mission; every one of them had been picked out of the horrible pit and miry clay of drunkenness and sin by the power of Christ. The mere saving of those forty men

had brought the ideal Hull so much nearer, For so long as there were forty men given to drink and vice the ideal Hull could never be realized ; but because these forty men had been saved, the kingdom of God to that extent had been brought nigh. Our Lord can do that sort of thing. There is no miracle in the way of transforming men that Jesus Christ cannot do, or that we cannot accomplish through Him. When Jesus Christ gets hold of men like that, and transforms them like that, the new world will speedily follow. We shall have men learning His lesson, and instead of living to be ministered unto, they will live to minister as He did ; we shall have men animated with the spirit of love and service that our Lord Himself showed in His life. When that kind of spirit rules men, there will come an end to all industrial strife, and between nations there will be abiding peace.

When I was in America twenty-one years ago I noticed on the platform behind me two enormous flags, side by side—the Union Jack and the Stars and Stripes. We had met for an International assembly. Right away at the top over the two national flags there

was a little tiny flag with a blue cross upon it. I had noticed that tiny flag without realizing that any special significance attached to it. One day, however, one of our Vice-Presidents got up and called attention to these flags at the back of the platform, and he said: "Do you see that little flag at the top, that tiny little thing with a blue cross? It is the Divine Service Flag of the United States Navy. That flag was flying at the mast of the battleship *Iowa* when she sailed into battle against the Spaniards. It is the only flag that is ever allowed to float above the Stars and Stripes." It was flying there above the Union Jack as well as the Stars and Stripes. To me it was just a parable. The flags of the nations will fly in friendship side by side when that little flag with the cross on it floats over them all. The Cross will unite class and class, and people to people, and we shall have a world of peace and brotherhood and goodwill.

If all this be true, we are not going to get this better order simply by economic schemes. By all means let us go on with our efforts to create fairer conditions. But you are never going to get a new world that way. You



are only going to get it by a change of heart ; and when it comes to a change of heart, there is only one Person in the world that can give a new heart, and that is, the Lord Jesus Christ. I am here to re-affirm my faith in Him as the one and only hope of this old stricken world of ours. If that be true, what is the duty lying upon us just now ? the duty lying upon the Christian Church ? The renewal of our faith in the mission of the Christian Church itself, and still more, the revival of our faith in its Gospel. I should like to see a return to a plainer and more courageous preaching of the Gospel. We have been busy amongst the superficialities and shallows long enough. It is about time we launched out into the deep, and we really touch the deep of the human soul only as we preach Jesus Christ as the Saviour from sin. I remember very well, a few years ago, visiting a clergyman, eighty-four years of age, in my own town : We got talking about things, and he said, “ Dr. Jones, the only thing I find peace in, and that I can really rest upon, is the finished work of Christ.” He had given fifty years to the preaching of the Gospel. He was one of the saints who were

in the earth. And this dear old saint went on to say: "Every night when I go to bed, I repeat that old verse :

" Jesus, I will trust Thee,  
Trust Thee with my soul ;  
Guilty, lost and helpless,  
Thou canst make me whole.  
There is none in heaven  
Or on earth like Thee ;  
Thou hast died for sinners—  
Therefore, Lord, for me."

I do honestly and profoundly believe that we are simply in the shallows skirting about amongst superficialities until we get a Gospel deep enough to deal with the fact of sin, until we proclaim Jesus Christ and Him crucified as the power of God unto salvation to all that believe.

The Church has been lukewarm about this great business of proclaiming its Gospel.

We are living in a time of great industrial unrest, and there are plenty of people who have got their panaceas for the ills that beset us from that side. I hear of young fellows who at every street corner, and in every hall they can get hold of, every night in the week, in season and out of season, are preaching certain economic theories as remedies for

the present distress. I do not care how perfect these theories are, they are never going to be the ultimate solution. We have got the cure in our hands. You and I know who can cure the present distress and really turn this land of ours into the land that we want it to become. Why should men with economic theories to propound be so passionately in earnest, and the Church of Christ let judgment go by default? What we really want is the same amount of fervour shown by the Christian Church, in the proclamation of its mighty Gospel, as those men show in the proclamation of economic theories. We want a great aggressive campaign on the part of the Christian Church. We have been in the trenches long enough. We ought to get out and engage in a great "offensive." When the Christian Church has got faith in the Gospel committed to its charge, we shall see a revival coming, and with the revival of religion there will come the happier world in which Christ shall be Lord.



# THE RECOVERY OF THE CHURCH

BY THE REV. CANON H. A. WILSON, R.D., RECTOR  
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A CYNIC has spoken of “the Church Impotent here in earth.” It is not so bad as that, but the situation is serious enough to warrant the stinging criticism. On the whole, nowadays, the world and the Church live very happily together. Occasionally the latter utters a protest or a rebuke. Indeed from time to time it has looked as if a conflict might arise, but the rupture has been averted and all has been calm. You may explain it in many ways, for there are many contributing causes—partly it is due to the veneer of decency which the world has assumed, partly to the divisions within the Church, but most of all it is to be attributed to the loss of vision and the forgetting of her mission, which afflict the Divine Society.

Our Lord said : “ In the world ye shall have tribulation ”—but we don’t have tribulation : this is due to no compassion on the world’s part. Our Lord said : “ Ye shall be hated of all men for My Name’s sake.” And here again there is an arresting contrast with facts as they are. I do not mean to suggest that the Church should deliberately court unpopularity or hatred, but unless we are to divest our Lord’s words of all meaning, it is perfectly plain that He means that the mission of the Church will bring it into continual conflict with the world, it will be constantly at war either as an invading force or as an army of occupation in an enemy’s land.

This is “ one note of the true Church ” which we appear to have lost. We seem to-day to have sold our sword and bought a garment, a quiet and respectable costume which keeps us warm and snug, and though not entirely up-to-date according to the world’s standard of fashion, is at least not hopelessly *démodé* !

But at the same time there is unquestionably a widespread and very hopeful discontent with this situation. From this quarter and from that, with increasing frequency,

voices of protest are being raised. Men and women with receptive souls are becoming more and more uneasy and restless as they see the need in the world for the witness and influence of the Church. A something is needed as a balancing element in life. Politics require some constant quantity, some abiding principle, upon which to build, rather than the spasmodic opportunism so characteristic of to-day. Industrial life is hopelessly at sea. The most that can be achieved by conferences and conversations is some brief armistice as a prelude not to final peace but to another outbreak of war. Social life is all awry. The old moorings have been lost. No one wants to work, every one wants to play. Seriousness has departed and frivolity reigns, a frivolity more than tinged with coarseness, as the crowded divorce courts prove, with additional judges called in to cope with the press of business !

It is unnecessary to develop all this further. Hearts in tune with God are filled with deep anxiety and a profound disquiet, a Spirit is moving them to do something to stem the tide. It is not courage which is lacking, but a clear perception of what needs to be done,



how to begin, who shall blow the trumpet. The time is not yet quite ripe for a spiritual Napoleon, for the force to follow such a one is not yet sufficiently alive and alert. The first need is that the Church should recover itself and learn its mission in the world; it has got to get back to its first principles. So let us for a little while return to those earliest days in the history of the Church to endeavour to clear our own sight. It is quite vital that we should have clearly in mind the purpose of the great Head of the Church when He called His Society into being.

So let us go to the Upper Room on the last night in the Incarnate Life of our Blessed Lord. He is going to leave His followers behind in the world—no longer will they see His Form or hear Him speaking with bodily lips. If ever it can be possible to get intimate knowledge of the purpose of Jesus for His disciples, it will be now. Three times He bids them love one another. “A new commandment I give unto you,” “This is My commandment,” “These things I command you,” and each time it is “that ye love one another.” That tender mutual love which is to have as its ideal the love of Jesus Him-

self for them, is to be the proof to "all men" that they are His disciples. But they are to be bound together by more than a bond of sacred love. There is a great truth which they all believe. "I am the way and the truth and the life. . . . Believe Me that I am in the Father and the Father in Me." The Master declares Himself to be their all in all, the centre of their faith. Nor is this all. Their companionship with Him is not to end; it is not to be an experience they will look back upon with yearning longing. "I will not leave you comfortless, I will come to you. . . . The world seeth Me no more, but ye see Me." Indeed the union is to be closer than ever. "I am the Vine, ye are the branches," and just as the life of the vine flowed through every leaf and twig and tendril, so the Life of the Master should pulse through every one of His disciples. To their aid He would send the Spirit of Truth, Who would abide with them for ever, guiding, controlling, teaching, and energizing them. In this little brotherhood there was then this fourfold bond—a common love, a common faith, a common life, and a common power.

After the Resurrection experiences again

they met Him on Olivet. He told His disciples then of their mission—at home, abroad, to the widest limits of the world they were to be His witnesses, and “Lo,” He said, “I am with you always.”

It is all very familiar to us, but, as so commonly happens, it is the familiar things we so easily overlook. The Church of Christ bears but slight resemblance to-day to that first picture and that great ideal. It was perfectly clear-cut in the minds of St. Paul and St. Peter. We recall how St. Paul likened the Church to the human body, every member with a special function to perform, every member obeying the head, and all the members working together for a great achievement. We recall, again, St. Peter's picture of a great building designed and carried out by God, in which all the living stones unite for a grand result. And not only in those apostolic days, but also in the later generations, we recall how faithful the Church was to that pattern shown it by God. Few in numbers, poor in social position, wealth and worldly power, but rich in the Spirit of God, it faced an effete civilization whose chief power lay in its appeal to the lowest and coarsest human

passions. It stood up to the great imperial power of Rome, and without any appeal to arms, but solely by the dead weight of its purity and enthusiasm, it triumphed. The secret of its success was to be found in the courage of the Christians, their passionate loyalty to their ever-present Master, their love for one another, their splendid carelessness of their own safety, their utter disregard of worldly success, their ardent zeal to serve and to sacrifice themselves in the service of others.

Such, briefly, was the ideal of the Church in the Mind of its Master, and when that ideal was expressed in the world, though only imperfectly, it was irresistible.

It is this recovery of ideal by the Church which the world to-day needs. The world is sick—and the Church is sick. We believe that there would be an immediate response by the blasé, jaded world, if only the Society of Christ could regain its vision. The world is weary to death of the selfish clamour of voices seeking the best and snuggest places each for himself; the world is disappointed and disillusioned with a civilization which could neither save it from the misery of war nor

repair the ravages that war has made ; the world is weeping, heart-broken, longing for something better, some sure knowledge of something which will not fail. Its needs are very incoherently expressed—"Who will show us any good?" It is for the Church to answer. But it can only be a re-vitalized Church which can meet the need.

The Church must re-learn that its mission in the world must be its first concern. It will need a very real regeneration to grasp this. We seem all of us to be obsessed with the idea that Jesus created the Church merely, or at best primarily, for the sake of creating it. In the many discussions of the problem of reunion, Church leaders talk of the preservation of their own position and view-point, of the vital importance of remembering the great history of this Church or that, of the disastrous thing it would be if this communion or that should become submerged and lose its individuality. But no Church is an end in itself, it is only a means to an end, and that end is the fulfilment of its mission to mediate a Living Christ to a perishing world. The Church has to learn the supreme lesson taught by her Lord : "Except a corn of wheat fall

into the ground and die it abideth alone, but if it die it shall bring forth much fruit."

Again the world looks for other-worldliness in the Church. It may be much to the advantage of the Church to catch this or that favouring breeze—but Jesus never called His Society into being to seek advantage. When He put a sword in its hand, He meant that sword to be kept sharp and to be used, whatever the cost might be. The note for to-day is the note of Christian militarism.

“ The Son of God goes forth to war,  
A glorious crown to gain.  
His blood-red banner streams afar,  
Who follows in His train ? ”

The opportunity of to-day, the golden chance for service and sacrifice, can only be seized and used by the Church of Jesus. But that Church must be re-baptized by the Spirit of God, it must recover its first love, its several parts must be united by the links of brotherly love, and then, conscious of the Eternal Promise of her Lord, she can go out to save the world, to bind up the broken-hearted, and to re-build the waste places.





# THE HOLY SPIRIT IN RELATION TO "CREATIVE CHRISTIANITY"

BY THE REV. W. FULLER GOOCH

THE subject before us is one of the greatest and most important that could occupy the minds of any assembly, and one trembles rather to enter upon it because of its deep, solemn weight, and essential relation to the theme of our Conference.

Reference has been made several times in our meetings, by speakers and chairmen, to the wording of our general subject, "Creative Christianity," and one has been asked outside the meetings what we really intend by this expression. It may be well for a moment or two to preface what one has to say about the subject in its relation to the Holy Spirit, and the relation of the Holy Spirit to it, by defining its terms. What is Christianity?

It is not Christendom ; it is not a religious cult which has been developed from one or another source of human genius or thought. Christendom is a far wider term than the Christian Church, and includes very much that the Christian Church, if true to the leading of the Holy Spirit, must exclude. It is not by any means such a thought of Christ as may be brought to the mind by outside speculation rather than by the direct teaching of the Word of God. The Christ of a Strauss, or a Renan, or a Harnack, is not the Christ of God. It is the Christ of God Who is at the heart of Christianity, and the Christ of God rises far above the naturalistic ideas which modern thought has made particular use of to express the Christ of Christianity.

Christianity is not theology ; it is far beyond that. It is not the system or the creed of any one Church, or of any one section of the Christian Church. Such systems may include, or they may not, vital Christianity. But in all cases Christianity is far above and far more inclusive, and wide, and Divine, than any human system or Church can possibly make it.

“Our little systems have their day,  
They have their day and cease to be;  
They are but broken lights of Thee,  
And Thou, O Lord, art more than they.”

What then is Christianity? It is Christ, Christ in His living personality, and in the expression of His mind, as reflected in His Word, as the great Teacher come from God. Christianity is a revelation, a direct revelation, a definite revelation coming straight from the heart and mind and counsel of God through Jesus Christ as the Revealer, and the Holy Spirit as the will and force of it all. Christianity breathes, Christianity lives, Christianity works. Christianity is the greatest dynamic that has ever entered into the world, so great that it cannot possibly owe its origin to, or depend, in any degree, upon, human thought or suggestion. It is outside the sphere of Natural Religion, and belongs only to that which has been revealed. Hence it is that the dynamic of Christianity is the Holy Ghost.

We speak in our general subject of “*Creative Christianity*.” What do we mean by that? We mean that there is a force in true Christianity to create, to produce, to

influence, as nothing else can create, produce or influence. Between the "old creation" and the "new" we all know there is a close and a designed analogy. This is shown in the Word of God itself. "If any man be in Christ, he is a new creation." "God Who commanded the light to shine out of darkness hath shined in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ." "We are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them." Christianity means, in its individual application, "the new man who after God is renewed in knowledge after the image of Him Who created him." It is most important for us to remember these things, at the very outset, and to come to this as our definite assertion: The force which makes Christianity creative is the Holy Spirit of God.

That leads me to call attention to special characteristics of the force which makes Christianity creative. First of all, let me say that this force, being the Holy Ghost, is an *almighty* force. The Hebrew word for *creation* means to bring that into exist-

ence which had no existence aforetime ; to bring out of nothing. This demands an almighty creative Power. In the Hebrew of Genesis i. 1 the term translated " God " is in the plural form, and that word, intimating in its text a plurality in the Godhead, leads us at once to the great mystery and to the great essential fact of revelation, that God is Triune, and that in the creation of the world the Trinity of God has its conspicuous as well as its essential place. We may receive, or reject, or not, the statements of the Athanasian Creed, but there are points in that Creed which are essential to constitute a creative Christianity. We must admit that " there is one person of the Father, another of the Son, and another of the Holy Ghost. Such as the Father is, such is the Son, and such is the Holy Ghost. The Father is God, the Son is God, the Holy Ghost is God." But " the Holy Ghost is of the Father, neither made, nor created, nor begotten, but proceeding." It is in that procession of the Holy Ghost from the Father and from the Son that we find the dynamic force of Christianity demonstrated, not only in one specific age of Christian history, but continuously

throughout the whole. It was the Spirit of God Who moved upon the deep when the old creation sprang into being. As Milton has put it:

“Thou, O Spirit, from the first wast present, and with  
mighty wings outspread,  
Didst brood over the vast abyss and mad’st it pregnant.”

There you have the history too of Christianity and the new creation. You remember how at the Jordan river, at the baptism of our beloved Lord, the Holy Ghost descended from heaven in the form of a dove and abode upon Him. “From that day Jesus began to preach and to say.” And from that day Jesus Christ began to act. The anointing which came upon Him filled Him with power, a power which could overcome all the works and devices of the Evil One, and establish the Kingdom of God. From that moment He commenced a new history in the world which we call, and rightly so, creative Christianity. The dove-like Spirit brooded, first, over our Lord, and then over the one hundred and twenty in the Upper Room, and through them Pentecostally over the whole world,

beginning at Judæa, passing on to Samaria, reaching Galilee and then all the parts of the wide earth. It is an almighty Power, it is the Holy Spirit producing creative Christianity.

Let us dwell for a moment on the fact that it is a *Personal* Power. It has been said that the Greek language knows no word for *person* or *personality*, and that it is a mistake to speak of the personality of the Spirit of God. It may be that the word *person* does not express perfectly the reality of the Holy Ghost in His relation to the Father and to the Son. But no one has been able to give us a better word, and when we study our Scriptures concerning the Holy Spirit as the third expression of the Blessed Trinity, we very soon find that personality is continually affirmed of Him. Personal attributes are ascribed to Him as truly and definitely as they are to the Father or to the Son ; and in our own experience we are conscious that creative Christianity comes into our own life and leads us into the presence of God and the realization of the great truths of God by a personal agency and power exerted upon us. We realize that there is a



personal communion with the Holy Ghost which is at the root of all our experience, and without the consciousness and pursuance of which we could not maintain our Christian experience or our Christian practice. A man who knows prayer in its true power and in its reality, knows very well that prayer is not to him a mere form, prayer is not just an outward and external surrounding; it is an inward impulse. Prayer means the Holy Spirit coming to him and leading him to God in a communion which gives a sense of companionship, assured partnership in all that Christianity is designed to bring to the heart and the mind.

The Holy Spirit, in the personality which belongs to Him and with the force with which He energizes things, occupies a most important place in the Scriptures. You have eighty-eight direct references to the Holy Ghost in the Old Testament Scriptures alone. You have "spirit" (*pneuma*) 388 times in the Greek Testament, and 260 at least out of these 388 are applied to the person or work of the Holy Spirit of God. And you will find that when the Holy Spirit is mentioned, and when titles are given to Him, they are

titles which not only involve the almightiness and personality of which we are speaking, but which also link Him and all the powerful outputtings of God, in truth and through truth, to the hearts and consciences of men. He is "the Spirit of God" according to the revealed Word; He is "the Spirit of truth" according to the teaching of our Lord in St. John xiv. 17. He is "the Spirit of grace." "Grace and truth came" from, or "by Jesus Christ." But that grace can only be known, it can only be experienced, it can only become a reality in one's life through the application of it by the Holy Ghost. He is "the Spirit of Life." It is all death till the Spirit of God creates the new life within. He is "the Spirit of wisdom." So did He descend on our Lord in the passage that our chairman read to us at the commencement of the meeting (Isa. xi. 1-3). He is "the Spirit of counsel and of might." He is "the Spirit of Christ," He is "the Spirit of power," He is "the Spirit of prophecy," He is "the Spirit of holiness." All these are attributes of the Spirit which indicate His energy and His energizing force. Christianity would not be creative were not the Holy Ghost

within it as occupying these positions and exercising these qualities.

That leads me to say that the force which makes Christianity creative is a *Divinely revealing* force. Christianity is no discovery of man. Christianity has not come to us through scientific research. Christianity has come to us by the direct revelation of God ; so much so that all Scripture, from Genesis to Revelation, is ascribed to the Spirit of God. The only rational account you can give of such a Bible as we possess is, that " holy men of God wrote and spake as they were moved " (borne along, energized) " by the Holy Ghost. No one prophecy, that is to say, no one statement of our Holy Scriptures, came by the will of man (2 Peter i. 20, 21). In every case you have the Spirit of God behind and pulsating through the Holy Scriptures, making them creative in their force, as much so as the voice of which we read in Genesis when God said, " Let there be light, and light was." So is it with the Holy Scriptures, because they are the mind of God given by the Spirit of God. Thus it is that " the Word of God is quick and powerful, sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing

even to the dividing as under of soul and spirit and of the joints and marrow, and is a Discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart."

The force which makes Christianity creative is a *Regenerative* force. It is not a force for reconstruction in the first instance ; it is not a force for reformation in the main, in the forefront of the work done. It is a work of regeneration. We were all glad last night, at the great meeting held here in connection with our Conference, to see and hear how Dr. Jones emphasized this ; how he declared that he had no faith whatever in any form of social economy, social revolution, or anything else short of the regenerating work of the Holy Ghost. We rejoiced as he insisted upon the point that it is only by the regeneration of the individual man that society can ever be what God intends it to be. Even so, the force, the dynamic of our Christianity is a regenerative force. " Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he neither can see or enter into the kingdom of God." The corruption of human nature necessitates the creation of a new life within the soul, which Christianity alone can account for or produce.

Let me remark that Christianity is a *Christo-centric* force. The Holy Ghost never works apart from Christ ; and I will put the converse—Christ never works apart from the Holy Ghost. The work of the Holy Spirit in this dispensation is essential to glorify Christ. “He shall glorify Me.” “He shall take of the things that are Mine, and show them unto you.” One of the most marvellous things in connection with the outputtings and power of the Holy Spirit is how—I may reverently say it—He hides Himself that the Christ of God may come into the forefront and be the glory and majesty of the whole. I said, Christianity is Christ. Surely it is so. He is its centre and its circumference, its “All in all.” The Spirit of God, in all His work in connection with Christianity, is spoken of as “the Spirit of Christ,” as the Spirit of God’s Son,” as “the Spirit of Jesus Christ.” So much so that to have the Spirit is to have Christ ; they are inseparable.

It is a *Sanctifying* force. Christianity is the sworn foe of sin. That is one reason why the Holy Spirit is designated in Scripture as “the Spirit of holiness,” and why, over

and over again, we read of Him as "the Holy Spirit." Where the Spirit of God works, evil hides its head, whether it be within the heart that has been won by His gracious influence for Christ, or whether it be within the Church as a corporate body, holiness characterizes all within the Spirit's sphere of operation. Where the Holy Ghost energizes, evil departs, holiness springs up, and practical sanctification is realized and seen.

I venture to say that the force, again, is a *Social* force. We who hold to the old-time religion that our chairman spoke about—we are charged sometimes with being indifferent to the social conditions and social needs of our time. God forbid that we should be. The heart that does not take to itself the miseries and sorrows and sins of society, all the world over, knows very little, if anything at all, of the energizing of the Spirit of God. The Spirit of God yearns over the universe, yearns over the whole world. No race is too barbaric, no race is too uncivilized, no class of person can be too vile for the Spirit of God to ignore or neglect His great work in this dispensation of revealing Christ and inviting to the Gospel of the Cross. Equally

so, if the power of the Holy Spirit is energizing us, we cannot live in our own districts without a local concern for the sorrows and miseries and sins of society, the more so as we are convinced that the only remedy is found in the Gospel of God.

But where we part company with so much that is said and done to-day is just this. We say that it is Christ Who alone can effect the change required, it is the Christ Who must be revealed and applied to the heart; and without the definite work of the Holy Ghost through the Christ and by the Christ, do what you will, you leave man still the same. You may reform his life, you may turn the drunkard into a sober man, you may make the profane swearer to be careful of his language, but you do not so change his heart, and until the heart is changed there can be no such radical change as will produce the condition of things for which we pray and would spend and be spent. There is a social power in the Gospel. I have never known a man, however deep or far gone from God and truth and purity—I have never known a man to be converted by the power of the Holy Spirit and to be brought to Christ, but



his whole life was changed. The atmosphere of his life will be altered. Was he in rags and tatters before? You will see him decently clothed now. Was he the pest of society before? He has become in his measure a blessing now. For the creative energizing power of the Holy Ghost is not content to be merely within the spiritual sphere of the regenerated man's life; it must burst forth and go out, touching everything with which the regenerated soul may come in contact. Yes, there is most surely a social force in "Creative Christianity."

There is a *Heart-melting* force. I cannot sit down without urging this. We are living in a day that is called intellectual; we are living in times when people seem content to mould their Christianity for themselves. We are ever being confronted with some new theory of what is called Christian truth. Such theories abound. Can you show me any one of them which is an improvement on the Old Gospel, on the Gospels and the Acts and the Epistles of our New Testament? Has a single ray of light come from other sources to add to the beams of the Sun of Righteousness, or to the truths that the

Spirit of God has embodied in them? You have seen the truth despoiled of much of its power; you have seen the Christian teaching of the New Testament taken away, and substituted for it a mere chimera of human genius and imagination. But you have never seen the effects that are produced by the Spirit of God produced by these substitutes. Take modern thought as you will—and modern thought may have its place—we are bound to think. But, as the Apostle says, the important matter is “not to think of ourselves more highly than we ought to think”—a passage greatly misunderstood; not referring to the overweening estimate of oneself which pride and vainglory would seek to bring us to, but referring to the thoughts of the mind, that they should never go beyond the thoughts of God, or seek to transcend the revelation which the Holy Ghost has given. “He that goeth onward,” says St. John, meaning beyond the revelation that the Spirit has given, can only wander into error and get further apart from God and Truth (2 John 9).

How important to see this: That the force of creative Christianity is a force which,

while it is limited to revelation, is yet boundless as revelation itself, and as the God of revelation, in its energies and its powers; and how important to see that only within its range can we really be doing work for God. Dr. Saphir, a prince of teachers and expositors—how I wish that that wonderful book of his, on *The Unity of the Scriptures*, were in the hands of every reader of the Bible here this morning; he once said: “I do not dread in these days the Pagan, I do not dread the Infidel, I do not dread the Sceptic. I dread the false, compromising, conciliating modern teaching of the Churches. That is the only thing I do dread.” We may well dread it. It saps the life from root and branch of the Christian tree; while coming back to the Word itself in the living power of the Holy Ghost, brings Pentecostal life and fulness, and shows that still the story of the Cross and the name of Jesus hold their own in every field. It was a wonderful tribute that Lecky made to the story of Christianity, to its vital power and its creative force, when he wrote these well-known words: “The brief record of three years of active life has done more to soften and

regenerate mankind than all the disquisitions of philosophers and all the exhortations of moralists." Why is the Bible still supreme in literature, why is the Bible still the moving force that is behind every true Christian work done in the world? Simply because the dynamic of the Holy Ghost is in it. It is "the word of the living God that liveth and abideth for ever."

Let me close by saying that the Holy Spirit in His creative work in and through Christ, has a voice. That voice has sounded through the ages. It is sounding to-day. Would to God that our ears were open to it. "To-day," saith the Holy Ghost, "harden not your hearts." "He that hath an ear let him hear what the Spirit saith to the Churches." These things were not said to a Christ-renouncing world. They were said to the Churches, and to those who were "holy brethren, partakers of the heavenly calling." Seven times, when the Lord spoke to the Seven Churches of Asia, breaking the silence which had existed for forty years or more after His ascension into glory—seven times over He repeated the words, "He that hath an ear to hear, let him hear what the Spirit

saith to the churches.” Do you not notice how in saying that in those seven connections He was attributing to His own words the force of the Holy Spirit to pass them on and to apply them in their living power? What Christ says the Holy Ghost says, and it is for us to sit at the feet of Jesus in these difficult, perilous last times, and to learn of Him; and as His voice in the power of the Divine Spirit thrills our soul we shall find ourselves transformed, newly created, and we shall be “beholding,” or reflecting, “the glory of the Lord, changed into the same image from glory to glory, as by the Spirit of the Lord.”



## THE CRUCIFIED CHRIST

BY THE REV. DINSDALE T. YOUNG

THAT Christ should have been crucified, I think, more and more fills us with astonishment. I confess to you that the infinite wonder of it accumulates upon me. Is not one of the greatest needs to-day, even among Evangelical Christians, to have a keener, more vivid sense of wonder at these wonderful things? You noticed, as we sang just now, that memorable expression, "The wonderful redemption, God's remedy for sin." I will say nothing this afternoon willingly controversial or critical. But I cannot but say what I think you will all in your hearts respond to—that there is high need and an urgent need that we should all realize the marvellous elements in Evangelical religion. At all costs we must not let the amazement of it die down. Wesley, in one of his most familiar phrases,



the property of all the Churches, speaking of our dear Lord's precious death, says, "'Tis wonder all." I think the more books we read on the subject, and the more we meditate on it, and the more we have experience of its marvellous power over our own hearts, and the more we read of the miracles of the Book which is simply saturated with this amazing truth, the more we feel the wonder of it, the unspeakableness of it. How easy it is to use that Evangelical phrase and not to realize at all its amazingness.

Think of it a moment—"The crucified Christ." The intellectual astonishment of it, I think, we shall all realize. We have heard the story countless thousands of times, but the more we reflect upon it the more new it is, and new with a marvellousness that no words can express. Intellectually it abashes us. If any man says, "I cannot understand the death of Christ," who is there here that does not intellectually say "Amen" to such a one? I have often been greatly helped by a remark of Mr. Balfour in what I may call his most fruitful book, his *Foundations of Belief*. He has this remark on the Atonement—I think I reproduce it with almost verbal

accuracy—that “ If it were not too vast for our intellectual comprehension, it would be too narrow for our spiritual need.” I do not know how that strikes you, but it has impressed me as one of the sublimest comments on the Atonement in modern literature. It is not its intellectual vastity that is essential to its spiritual helpfulness ; and if I may freely speak unto you and may speak experimentally, the more I dwell upon the fact that it is not my knowledge of the crucified Christ, but my penitent dependence upon the crucified Christ, that saves me, the more I am thrilled with great joy. I do delight to say to people—may I say it to you?—it is one of the experimental platitudes that we can never afford to let go—we shall never be saved or condemned by our intellectual conception of the crucified Christ. I remember reading, many long years ago, in the life of Dr. Chalmers, a book I am always turning to, how he had been often greatly comforted to think that it is not seeing the Saviour brightly that saves us, but it is *looking* to Him. What a glorious fact that is ! If I might paraphrase those words, I would say, it is not the intellectual brightness of our view

of Christ crucified that saves us ; it is our looking to Christ crucified, looking with the eyes of the heart. It is not how I understand the Christ ; it is how I rely upon Him, that is the vital and important consideration.

And yet, what a wonderful theology the theology of the crucified Christ is. May I ask you to linger on the portals of the subject for a moment ? Is not there a danger that people get too impatient to-day with theology ? Is not it a sinister fact ? May it not be a spiritual peril that we are so apt to slight doctrine ? I think there never was a time when our pulpits needed to ring with theology as to-day. How wonderful the theology of the crucified Christ is ; and none the less wonderful because it can never be formulated in exact speech. It is intellectually transcendent. If any Christian should attempt to express it, he would be like myself, at a dead loss to give an ample philosophy of the Cross. But you prove its power seven times every day, and it is the proving of its power, not an intellectual concept, that is the matter of supreme importance. And yet, as far as we can follow it, just stretching lame hands

towards it, how precious the doctrine of the crucified Christ is.

But I want to submit to you what I hardly need to submit, but what it may be good to remind ourselves of in passing—that the phrase, doctrine, fact that Christ was crucified is an historical fact. Secular history attests that. But I am not saved by apprehending the secular fact; I am saved by the doctrine, the fact, as realized in my experience. We are not here to discuss theology, but we are here as Evangelical Christians who have the doctrine of the crucified Christ, a doctrine that we believe, a doctrine that satisfies us even intellectually, though there can be no complete philosophy of the wonderful fact, and a doctrine that brings such rest to the heart. We do not believe—I say it constantly—that the crucified Christ is to be represented finally by any such expression as this—that He is the ideal of self-sacrifice. We do not believe that this exhausts the great conception of Christ crucified—that He is an example of how fidelity to truth will bring suffering. There are those who say to-day that the explanation of our Lord's death is just this—that He came against the whirl

of the wheel of fate through His faithful testimony, and therefore perished, as faithful witness may have to perish. They do not exhaust this conception of the crucified Christ who say that it was murder, it was martyrdom. From one point of view it was the most terrible martyrdom of history. But I confess that I cannot say it quietly—I say it strongly—that a martyrdom cannot meet my spiritual needs. A martyrdom is pathetic and beautiful history; but I want a redemption. That is the true explanation of the crucified Christ. It was a redemption.

There are people who say to-day that a redemption is rendered superfluous by the fact that God is love. The New Testament teaching is that a redemption is provided because God is love; that, instead of the assertion, that *God is love* renders a redemption unnecessary, the fact that *God is love* is an explanation of the redemption. The New Testament, I venture to say, with concurrent voice, favours this witness—that the greatest demonstration that God is love is in the crucified Christ. I should not like to demonstrate that God is love from nature; I should

not like to be dependent on my impression that God is love from a study of history ; I certainly should not like to be left to infer that God is love from my own providential experience ; though I might gather experience from each of these factors. But when I see the crucified Christ, and I know that death means a thousand times more than I can conceive, that it means, that in that death my Lord redeemed my guilty soul, that in that death He not only destroyed my guilt, but opened up the possibility of my entire sanctification—then I feel that no words can ever express how that the crucified Christ is the central note of theology. Do not we often lose the blessedness of the subject because we do not dwell enough upon the doctrine? Is not it wonderful that when you open your Old Testament you find how the ideal of the crucified Christ is, so to say, adumbrated all the way from Genesis to Malachi, adumbrated in prophecy, adumbrated in types and in some golden sentences? Take a sentence from what is rightly called the Golden Passional of Isaiah. Who can say that the amplitude of that wonderful chapter is filled up by anything in Jewish history



apart from our Lord's death? "He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities; the chastisement of our peace was upon Him; and with His stripes we are healed. All we like sheep have gone astray: and the Lord hath laid upon Him," made to meet upon Him, "the iniquity of us all." I venture to say that these words represent the whole drift and tenor of the Old Testament. When you come to your New Testament, to the Gospels, the Acts and the Epistles, and last, but by no means least in significance, to the Apocalypse, they are all replete with the doctrine of the Atoning Death. I do not know how you feel, but the more I read that wonderful Apocalypse with which our Bible closes, and see portrayed there the life of the Church of God, and discover how the Atonement is the centre and soul of that revelation, the more I feel that the crucified Christ is indeed the centre-point of all true theology. If we are wrong about that we are wrong about everything theological. Thank God, it is not necessary to plead that point with you—it is necessary in some places. But I cannot leave it without urging that the theology or the doctrine of the



crucified Christ should be a matter of our constant thought. Do not let us for a moment yield to the notion that any merely ethical explanation of the Crucifixion is enough. Do not let us for a moment give way to the idea that we have considered the supreme thing about that death when we have dwelt on its social implications. Its social implications are glorious. But it was a redemption, it was an atonement. "God for a guilty world hath died." "God recommendeth His love unto us." He does, and by a thousand things, but supremely by this—"that while we were yet sinners Christ died for us."

I do not press any particular theory of the Atonement, but I will venture to bear my testimony. More and more do I see, and you see, I am sure, the vastitude to which I alluded of any philosophy of our Lord's Cross. I open my heart to you. Every day I live, yes, every day, this possesses me more and more completely in mind and heart—that that death was a *substitution*. I know it is an old-fashioned word, a word that is spurned in some quarters. I confess that it satisfies my guilty conscience and comforts

my troubled heart, and gives me a joy in my religion incomparable. When I look up and say He took my place, I cannot understand it. But He did it. "He bore my sins in His own body on the tree." If that be in any degree true doctrine, are we going too far when we say that this is the central thing in Christianity?

What is the great peculiarity of Christianity? I do not think that question was ever so much discussed as to-day. I venture to say that the great peculiarity of Christianity is our Lord's atoning death; and you have not begun to enter into the doctrinal affluence of Christianity, and certainly not into the rich experience of Christianity, till you proclaim to yourself, and to every one as you have opportunity, that Christ crucified is the great thing in the Christian message. If I preach everything else, but not that, I am keeping back the main thing. May I urge upon you—and I would urge it vehemently upon myself—that we strive to bring back "Christ crucified" to its central position? Let me give you an illustration of what I mean. We have heard very much, of late years, of the Incarnation, and we can hardly

hear too much of it. But more than twenty years ago such an acute observer of the signs of the times as the late Bishop Creighton, whom nobody ever charged with being narrow, made this remark: That he thought that our religion had suffered, of late years, by the undue emphasis on the Incarnation, and the too slight emphasis on the Atonement. Look round now, and is not that criticism yet more abundantly justified? The Incarnation would not avail us without the Atonement. The great thing in Christianity is the fact that Christ was crucified. Obviously there must be an awful explanation of such an awful fact. It could not have been for a slight thing. If a man tells me that He was crucified to set me an example of faithfulness, I say to myself that is not a great enough reason. If a man tells me that He was crucified as an example of self-sacrifice, it is a noble reason, but not an exhaustive reason. Incidentally, I may remark what a tremendous reflection it is on God if Our Lord was crucified only for such reasons. The holiest Man that ever lived, the Man that believed God as none other ever did, the Man who spent Himself for others as none ever did—God can allow

Him to be crucified ! I venture to say, it is the most terrible aspersion on the character of God that can ever be uttered, to say that such views of our Lord's death represent the conception of that death. But if He died to redeem a guilty world, if He took unto Himself the condemnation of man, if He was God manifested in the flesh and paid the penalty He had the right to have exacted ; if Jesus Christ died for me in a sense that I can only dimly apprehend, but the dim apprehending gives me a freedom, a joy, a peace that no words can express, draws the sting of death, lights up the great beyond and makes it attractive and not repulsive—that is a wonderful doctrine. If the Holy Ghost will use my words this afternoon to make the wealth of it a little more obvious to any of you, I shall thank Him as One who has greatly enabled and honoured me.

Passing from that sphere to the sphere of experience, if the theology of Christ crucified is so rich, what about the crucified Christ in Christian experience ? Let me just note one or two things to you ; let me give you what perhaps may be cheery reminders to

some of you. Just think of the power of the crucified Christ as it brings us conscious forgiveness. "I believe in the forgiveness of sins," the Christian Church continually declares. Will you pause with me and say to yourself—I am ever trying to say it to myself—"Do I realize the wonderful forgiveness of sins?" We must never let the marvel die away from that. It is the most amazing possibility of human life that sins can be forgiven. Mr. Spurgeon, who was a very great theologian, used to doubt whether anybody but the regenerated could believe in the forgiveness of sins. Martin Luther used to say that it was the hardest of all things to faith. It is one of the penalties we are paying for the lamentably light view of sin in much modern theology—that the forgiveness of sins does not loom on us as the amazing thing it is. But when we come as kindred sinners to the crucified Christ, when we say, "I cannot understand it, or only partially, but I believe it, and I stake my eternal destiny upon it, that he that believeth is saved and shall be for ever—oh, the marvellous consciousness we receive of the forgiveness of sins. In the beautiful and help-

ful prayer to which we have listened, the phrase, I think, was used, "The unhappy world." It is an unhappy world. One of the strangest ironies of to-day is that whilst the lust of pleasure burns at white heat there is an ever-deepening sadness. Your newspapers frankly admit that, your magazines admit it. It is not those of us who are supposed to be croaking who say it; it is the observers of the time who say it. The world is getting sadder. But if a man knows that his sins are forgiven, what springs of joy are opened in his heart! "We joy in God," said Paul, moved of the Spirit. That English word does not express the passion and rapture of the statement. "We *exult* in God, through our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom we receive the Atonement," the reconciliation. I tell you, there is not only a joy, but there is a rapture when a man, through resting on the crucified Christ, knows the forgiveness of sins.

Do you think that there is, generally speaking, in the Churches to-day, the joy that there used to be? Whatever the old theology did that is so much criticized in these days, it made the old folk happy. We are told that

they were gloomy folk. No doubt they had limitations, even as their critics have to-day. But, oh, what joy they had! I have seen men and women oppressed with poverty, harassed with sorrow, and then stretched on a dying bed of pain; but they have had a joy that was simply a miracle. Why? Because they knew that through the atoning death of Christ their sins were forgiven. We should get passion back in the Churches if that sense of the forgiveness of sins, which is only born at the Cross, could be recovered. We should then get "Hallelujahs" back. The miserable quietude that has settled upon so many of us would be lost. No religion can have a real joy except a religion that is radiant with the sense of the forgiveness of sins through Christ crucified.

May I go another step with you? What a wonderful place sanctification has in the realization of the crucified Christ. A sight of Christ crucified, however dim, expels sin. No man can live in deliberate sin who sees Christ crucified. No Christian can be content with a low level of Christian life if he sees his Lord on the Tree.



“Neither passion nor pride His Cross can abide,  
Both melt in the fountain that flowed from His  
side.”

And they won't melt in any other fountain. Damnable jealousies!—how damnable they look in the light of the Crucified! The horrible love of money that is a perfect leprosy nowadays even among many Christians—what a wretched thing it is in the sight of the dying Saviour! Our pettifogging pride—how infinitely contemptible it is in the presence of Christ crucified! You may preach ethics till your hair is white but unless you preach the Crucified Christ you are not serving the interests of true ethics. What is wanted more in the modern Church than a bright, beautiful, saintly religion, a religion of charms? Some of us are orthodox, but we are sour. Some of us hold a creed tenaciously, but our love and tenderness do not strike you. It is the Crucified Christ that must be trusted, depended upon. We must lash ourselves to the Cross, and then we receive that sanctification which is so pleasing to God and so precious to men.

I thank you for listening to just a few rudimentary words, mere reminders of the

great commonplace of this infinite need. Let us put Christ to the front. Brother preachers, preach the Crucified Christ, morning, noon and night. You may preach all else, but if you do not preach that, you are not preaching good news ; and it is good news the unhappy world wants.



## THE RISEN CHRIST

BY DR. JOHN DOUGLAS ADAM

WHEN Jesus died, Christianity as an experience was dead, or rather it had not yet been born. The followers of Jesus, on that first Good Friday night, were broken men and women, scattered, discouraged, and utterly in the dark. They possessed no solidity of character, they had no definite spiritual experience, they had no illumination, no message, no enthusiasm, no programme, no hope. If nothing further had happened they would have gone back to their former occupations with hallowed memories, but with no vision ; broken units, the victims of a dead cause in a hostile world. There would have been no growth in spiritual experience, no message, no Church, no New Testament, no propaganda.

But something happened. Jesus came back

to His followers after His death. He came back to them not merely as a memory, nor as an ideal, nor as a system of teaching, nor as a definition. He came back as the historic Jesus, a Presence, a Personality, challenging the personalities of His disciples. They did not expect Him. They were at first incredulous, then they were astounded, and their amazement had to be pacified into sobriety. After Jesus had died, and when He came back as a Presence, this relationship was not merely a passing vision. It was deepened into growing permanence, and became the controlling secret of their lives. They became more and more Christ-conscious, less and less self-conscious. Jesus became the home of their thought, the soul of their fellowship, the heart of their message. It was out of this personal knowledge of the living Christ, out of this personal relationship with Jesus after His death, that definite spiritual experience began. Up till then it was incoherent. Then it became definite, coherent, progressive. The experience which came as the result of an association with the living Christ was not born of a recollection of the teachings of Jesus. It was the result of a personal con-

tact. They made no reference to the teachings of Jesus ; they were conscious only of a Person, and the supreme element in the spiritual transformation was not supremely *teaching*, but a Divine life. The whole heart of the experience was born of a personal relationship.

It was out of this personal association with the living Christ that the Church was born, they had a common relationship to a common Lord. The Church was not a gathering around a Constitution or a Charter. The Church was a biological relationship. It was life, it was a unity of life which centred in the living Christ. The Church was not gathered around the Sermon on the Mount, but around Him Who uttered the Sermon on the Mount, and Who was greater than any sermon on the mount. The Church was Christo-centric, and the secret of its energy was a biological relationship.

It was from this relationship that the New Testament was born. Not a word of the New Testament would ever have been written if the followers of Jesus had not resumed association with Him after His death. They could have had no heart for the task, they

would not have had sufficient illumination to write it, they would not have had experience, they would have had no motive, and no ultimate purpose. The New Testament was born out of the relationship with Jesus as a risen Presence. When the disciples preached Christ to their fellows, no part of the New Testament was in existence. The first part of it that came into existence was the First Epistle of St. Paul to the Thessalonians. We should have had no record of the earthly life and teachings of Jesus at all if there had been no personal experience of His risen Presence. The New Testament was begun as a record of an experience. St. Paul knew the risen Lord before he saw the significance of the earthly Lord. He went from the risen Christ to the historic Jesus; he went back from Him who lived in the heights to Him who lived in Galilee.

It was out of this personal relation that the Christian Gospel message came. The disciples called men to a living Person. St. Paul knew Jesus before he had a theological theory regarding Him. He had no theory until he saw the Lord in the heavens, and from



that knowledge he realized the theological content of it. Vision was the creator of its intellectual interpretation. It was out of the personal relation that the Christian Gospel message came. The disciples declared and demonstrated the presence and power of Jesus through an experience. It was to that fact that men and women responded, it was of that fact they testified. Growing spiritual experience, the Christian Church, the Gospel message, the New Testament were all created from contact with a living Presence and Power.

But how is this Christ to be made real to the Twentieth Century? We must have the thing done, not merely talked about or wished for. If Jesus was a spiritual fact in the first century, He is a spiritual fact in the twentieth century. It is of the nature of a spiritual fact that it is above time and space. If Jesus was real to men and women in the "upper room," Jesus may be real to men and women in London by the very nature of a spiritual fact. If Jesus was real in the first century, He can be real at this hour. That is to say, Jesus as a spiritual Presence is here. "Lo, I am with you alway." "I live," said St.

Paul, "yet not I, but Christ liveth in me ; and the life that I now live, I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me." That is what we must bring home to the mind of our time—that He is still here in spiritual reality, and that He is still the creative Centre of His Church and of all spiritual experience in that Church.

How is Christ made real to-day ? Primarily through the Scriptures. But I think there is a great danger—and I wish to speak carefully, but I speak with conviction—there is a great danger when we speak of the Scriptures as bringing Jesus Christ before our modern world, of being lost in the Scriptures and to forget Him. Jesus saw that in the case of His contemporaries. "Search the Scriptures, for in them ye think ye have eternal life, and these are they which testify of Me." Jesus is greater than the Scriptures, great and blessed and hallowed as the Scriptures are. I was taken recently to an Exhibition of Art by a very brilliant artist. His artistic criticism was extraordinarily keen, but it concerned the details of the pictures, their colour and their form. I did

not really see the pictures. I simply heard brilliant criticism. I am afraid that a great many of us unwittingly are eclipsing the presence of Jesus by all kinds of criticism, brilliant and otherwise. Young people are not seeing the face of the Lord because of spirit hyper-criticism ; and I speak of no one school when I say that. Ultra-conservative and ultra-liberal are both at fault. We want men to see Christ, and not criticism. If a young man tells me that he has a difficulty regarding some detail in the New Testament, I have the right to say to him: Do not let that difficulty obliterate your faith. It was not intended that it should. We go from the Bible to Jesus. Jesus is the ultimate authority, by His presence and power, His grace and forgiveness. We come back from Him to the Bible and make the Bible our own ; by a process of spiritual assimilation and through our relation to Jesus Christ no criticism can take it away from us. As one great Bible scholar has said, the Bible is the river which flows into the sea, which is Christ. We go down that river into the sea, and we come back into the river on the tide from the sea. The river, the Bible, is the temporary

basis of faith, till we know Christ ; and then we come back from Christ to the Bible and assimilate it with the life He has given us and the vision He has given us, until we make it our own spiritually and not merely intellectually. How can we really and vitally know the Bible till we know Him ? Let us not dogmatically stand between men and women, putting barriers between them and the seeking Son of God. How shall we make Christ real to men to-day ? The living Christ is made real through the testimony of the Church. The Christian consciousness in the Church has many faults, but after all it is a unique spiritual fact in the consciousness of mankind. It is not merely psychological, it is not merely moral, it is not merely a vague theistic conception. It is a vision of God in Christ, answering the ultimate needs of human nature. And we know it. We know it not only in the fervour of our own experience, but from the consciousness of some of the best people who ever lived. There is an historic witness in the Christian Church proceeding from the innermost zone of human consciousness of the complete sufficiency of Jesus. This witness is declared not merely through

the general testimony of the Church, but through the individual testimony of Christians. Those men in the first century made Jesus Christ real to their fellows by living His life. "Men took knowledge of them that they had been with Jesus." They saw His face and they saw His power in His disciples. When we say Jesus Christ is made real through the testimony of individual experience, we mean, first of all, the suggestion of Jesus through a surrendered personality. When Sir Isaac Newton saw the apple fall from the tree, it was a suggestion or hint to him of a larger fact behind the local fact. The flag of a nation is a suggestion of nationality. A picture is a suggestion. When you see it you are not merely thinking of the picture, but of the larger picture which it suggests—of hill and vale and stream. So the disciple of Christ, in the first place, is meant to suggest Jesus. Men want to see Jesus, and they can see Him most effectively through suggestion, such as a disciple under the control of Christ manifests.

But the Christian testimony is also an atmosphere. Flowers grow in an atmosphere. Life is changed in an atmosphere, without any

argument, both from worldliness and to worldliness. A spiritual atmosphere changes men and women, without any discussion whatever, immediately and automatically. It changes not only desires, but the intellectual outlook, because it refocuses the faculties of the being so that things are seen differently in an hour of silence. So Jesus is made real through the atmosphere which Christian men and women shed abroad. Every one is helping the world either up or down. Some are helping the world toward Jesus all the time. In the totality of our influence we are drawing people either toward Him, or away from Him, by the atmosphere we carry. The atmosphere carried by some people may be such as to put others, when they enter it, into a condition of perplexity. While we enter the presence of another, and we are liberated, the sunshine is round about us, we feel that our powers are free, and the atmosphere of the eternal is about us. "They took knowledge of them that they had been with Jesus." After all, the supreme apologetic of Christianity is the suggestion of and the atmosphere of Jesus Christ brought home to heart and mind.

Jesus Christ is also to be made manifest in His spiritual reality by a spoken testimony. Jesus said: "Ye are My witnesses." A witness is not a barrister. A barrister as a student of law may construct very clever argument. But a witness says: "I know, I saw," and the barrister's clever dialectic may fall like a house of cards. The witness is one who *knows*. Just as those men in the early days were witnesses to the living Christ, and multitudes believed through their witness, so are Christians His witnesses to-day. One fears our testimony is feeble or silent. We have somehow lost the art, we are either afraid or ashamed to declare our testimony concerning our personal knowledge of Christ. If all the Christian people in London were to make an humble testimony concerning Jesus Christ to those whom they know, telling them simply and quietly of the living Presence, that they know His power, that they know His forgiveness—we should realize an immediate religious quickening. We talk about praying for the coming of the Holy Spirit. But the Holy Spirit is here, He is waiting to be gracious, and whenever we are in the attitude of testifying of the living Christ, the



Spirit will honour it and illumine it for the regeneration of lives.

How may we know living Christ in our own lives? For He is here, just as really here as if we were to fall down before Him. How is He to become real? There is only the distance of our will between Him and the heart of our personality. If a man or a woman penitently wills Jesus Christ in his or her life, He is there. The trouble is that we get taken up with our own subjective states, such as the condition of our will and of our faith. But when we think of our faith, or will, or emotion, we have eclipsed our sense of Christ. It is not a blessing we want, but the Blesser; it is not experience, but the Creator of experience. If we say we know that Christ is in our lives because we feel it, we are trusting in an emotion, not in Christ. If we will Him there, He is there with His redeeming power to restore our souls. If we keep our eyes upon Him, and away from ourselves, from our will, from our faith, from our emotion, from our past experience, and think of Christ—because all self-consciousness is weakness, and all Christ-consciousness is power—and carry that Presence to our

surroundings as a suggestion, as an atmosphere, and as a testimony, we shall do something to bring the creative presence of Christ into the hearts of men in this day of crisis.



## CHRIST AND THE BIBLE

BY CANON J. S. SIMPSON, D.D.

(Dr. Simpson was unavoidably absent from the meetings, but his paper now appears, with some amplifications, in this volume.)

It is common property of intelligent people that our Lord used the Old Testament in such a way as to certify it for all time as a record of extraordinary value and significance. But only the sensitive observer detects the peculiar quality of His testimony which sets the book in a place by itself. In His moments of strongest temptation and deepest agony, He drew from it the life-blood of His faith. In the record of His initial great temptation, which must be accepted as His own statement of what happened if it is to have any value for us, He foils each assault of the Evil One by a quotation from the Old Testament, each of them taken from the book of Deuter-

onomy. In His dark hours on the Cross, when He wrought His great deed for the deliverance of mankind, two of the Seven Words are drawn unmistakably from the Psalms; one the word of His sorest anguish, "My God, my God, why hast Thou forsaken me?": the other the word of His surest confidence, "Father, into Thy hands I commend my spirit."

Just in the measure that we feel how surprising this is, shall we recognize how inestimable in value the Old Testament is. Our Lord lived in unsullied and unbroken fellowship with the Father. On the deeps of His nature the sunlight of the Father's unclouded love ever shone until the hour of dereliction on the Cross. Yet in the critical hour of temptation, He drew His strength, not from the depths of His own consciousness, but from the assurances of the revelation made by God in ancient days. If this is an amazing proof of the reality of His human life and experience, it is an equally amazing proof of His recognition of the Old Testament as the authentic and reliable vehicle of the message of God to man. If our Lord chose—may we not say needed?—to reinforce

His own unclouded consciousness of the Father from the written word, how much more must we who are His sinful brethren try and confirm any utterances of our religious consciousness by the same standard? If He chose—again may we not say, needed—to steady His own soul in the hour of agony and of departure by the prayers inspired from on high in ancient days, how much more may we rely on the succour from the same source as essentially Divine?

This first impression of the high valuation of the Old Testament by Jesus Christ is strengthened when we study His use of the Old Testament to bring forth the deep truths suggested by it. When challenged by the Sadducees concerning the resurrection, He silenced them by laying bare the significance of the familiar words, "The God of Abraham, Isaac and of Jacob," a significance until then wholly missed. It is impossible to escape the implication that to Him these words were worthy of patient thought and entire confidence. They said more than they seemed to say on a cursory reading. They said what could only be discovered by a mind that brought to them reverence and

expectancy. If it be suggested that our Lord's use of the Old Testament was inevitable, as it was the only book acknowledged to have final authority in religion, it is sufficient to answer that the significant thing is not that He used it, but the way in which He used it. While to Him "the Scriptures" were a revelation of unspeakable value and incontestable authority, He yet set forth unmistakably that they were a progressive revelation, culminating in Himself, by the freedom with which He dealt with them and by the daring with which He supplemented them.

In the light of these facts concerning our Lord's attitude to the Old Testament, we may proceed to consider the larger subject of the relation of Christ and the Bible as a whole. Christ, then, is the standard by which the Bible, no less than the Church, must be criticized.

We see Jesus Christ in His teaching adopting, as we have said, a very free attitude towards the Old Testament. I do not think it would have been possible for Him to treat it, as for example in the Sermon on the Mount, if He had adopted those principles



of interpretation and that conception of inspiration which Christians have often adopted with regard to the Scriptures as a whole. Nor would He have been able to undercut the Levitical legislation with the freedom implied in such declarations as: *The Sabbath was made for man*; or, *From the beginning it was not so*. These principles are to us so familiar that their revolutionary character is not readily perceived. Spiritual sympathy is often strangely careless of formal consistency. How must it have struck contemporaries when Jesus also asserted that not one jot nor one tittle of the Law should pass away?

Is a freedom not unlike that of the Master Himself possible for evangelicals? I think not only that it is, but that some of the greatest evangelicals have exercised it. We know, of course, that the Bible assumed an entirely new importance in the age of the Reformation, because it was the discovery of the Bible that produced the criticism of the mediæval system. Are we equally alive to the fact that in the age succeeding the Reformation the old habits of thought reasserted themselves in the liberated churches, and that an

authority was accorded to the Scriptures even less defensible than that which attached to the uncriticized customs and unsifted tradition of the Church?

It is well known that Martin Luther called the Epistle of James an epistle of straw. That is an opinion which most of us will probably find sufficient reason to reject. But the fact remains that this great master of evangelical religion was able to give it. He was clearly applying a standard of criticism to the sacred canon itself. What that was is suggested by the very figure he employs—an epistle of *straw*. St. Paul speaks of the wood, hay, stubble, built upon the one foundation, which is Jesus Christ. Luther, it is quite evident, was endeavouring to apply St. Paul's own standard to the teaching which he found within the very covers of the Bible itself.

St. Paul finds the ultimate seat of authority for Christians neither in the private judgment of the individual nor in the decrees of the community, but in *Christ* (I Cor. iii. 11), or more specifically *the Gospel of Christ* (Gal. i. 7). And Evangelical Christianity, by the very name which it assumes, expresses assent. "Though we, or an angel from heaven,

should proclaim unto you any evangel other than that which we proclaimed unto you, let him be anathema." The Gospel is the inviolable thing, the self authenticating message, the absolute standard in the fellowship of faith, which, judging all else, is itself judged of none. Would it not, then, be true to say that, before in its complete form the Bible existed, when the greater part of the New Testament was not yet written, a formula was already in existence which ought to have prevented Christians from endowing the Scriptures with a final, far more with an infallible authority?

It is important thus to shift the emphasis from the Bible to Christ, not only in the interest of Christianity, which is the religion of a Person historically manifested and not of a book divinely written, but in the interest of a right attitude towards the Bible itself. The power of the Bible to touch the heart, enlighten the understanding, and inspire the will of him who reads is simply the presence of Christ, whose personality is there presented and brought into contact with the personalities which it influences.

We do not want any preliminary doctrines

of inspiration, which hinder rather than help, before we approach Christ through the medium of the Scriptures. Why are we slow to trust the great principle that Truth authenticates itself both in the experience of the individual and in the history of the race ?

It is a melancholy reflection that, in appealing to the warrant of Scripture against the authority of the Church as misrepresented in current teaching, the successors of the Reformers should have allowed themselves to attribute to the Scriptures the same sort of authority which had been claimed for the Church, instead of staking everything upon the Personality of Christ. I do not know which is really more fatal, the dogmatism of the Catholic or of the Protestant schoolmen. The latter is certainly the more difficult to maintain !

If, then, we are asked what we mean by the inspiration of Scripture, I think we shall do well to reply that to call the Bible inspired is in the last resort the same thing as to assert that only through the Bible do we get to Christ. That is the fact that matters. The historical Jesus, who is also the exalted Christ, is nowhere presented in all the living

reality of His Personality but here. That is what makes this collection of writings unique in literature. It is the centrality of Christ that binds them together in an intelligible and matchless unity. I recognize them as God-given because they give me God. I find my Saviour here. A personality reaches us through its pages, the reality of which is assured by its power to save, and attested by the transformation in human life which it has effected and the influence it never ceases to exert among ever-widening circles of men and women.

What a lot of misplaced ingenuity, of special pleading, of sophisticated interpretation might have been saved, if only people had been able to perceive that an historical attitude towards the Bible was entirely consistent with evangelical faith! I have read a work the author of which had spent much of his time in visiting the Zoological Gardens to study the habits of the animals with a view to assuring himself and the public that the story of Noah's Ark was antecedently probable. How many theories have been invented to square the account of creation in Genesis i. with the latest scientific theories

of the origin of things ! With what eagerness do people often welcome criticism of the Old Testament, which appears to re-establish conservative positions, not because the conclusions are true, which may quite well happen to be the case, but because they are supposed to authenticate the statements of the Bible ! Surely the relation of the ancient Scriptures to Christ and His Gospel does not depend upon such considerations as these.

The Bible, like the Sabbath, should be our servant, not our master, if we are ourselves servants of Jesus Christ, separated unto the Gospel of God. The Christian believer will be enslaved to the letter, not even of the New Testament itself. In this connexion I would venture to cite what I have myself written in a little book called *Creative Revelation*.<sup>1</sup>

“We ought ” (I there said) “ to understand how entirely we are set free to examine and report upon the four Gospels, as on the rest of the New Testament, in a spirit which is as much that of free inquiry as the spirit with which we approach the manuscripts of Virgil or Thucydides. I believe that the Gospels present to us the historical Christ. I believe

<sup>1</sup> A. R. Mowbray, 1912.

that He is rightly represented as a supernatural, or, if you prefer the term, a supranormal figure. I believe that Christianity grew out of the fact in which His activity culminates—His Resurrection on the third day from the dead. But that is quite another thing from saying that everything must have happened precisely as the Gospels represent it. These writings are historical documents, and for that reason are subject to the conditions under which such documents come into existence. Those who composed them were not exempt from the ordinary psychological laws of memory, observation, and influence, of which we must take account in the criticism of all similar documents. Just because Christianity is an historical religion it is positively reassuring to find that the testimony upon which we receive it is not exempt from the common characteristics of historical narrative.”

Let me repeat that the impression I desire to leave is that Christ is the standard by which the Bible itself must be criticized. Christ certifies His own reality alike to the individual believer and to the Christian fellowship. The assurance that these things are so is



already gained in the response which the Christ of the Gospels evokes. The simplest Christian knows in Whom he has believed. He believes neither because the Church tells him to do so, nor because the Bible is guaranteed free from error. He has found Christ, and Christ has found him. This alone is genuine Evangelicalism.

# THE WORLD'S NEED : FELLOWSHIP AND WITNESS

BY THE REV. M. E. AUBREY, M.A.

## I

WHEN Our Lord in His life saw men and women turn from their tasks weary and bowed with their toil, unsatisfied by the common aspirations and the common gains of life, we are told He was "moved with compassion," and that to Him they seemed as "sheep not having a shepherd." Humanity was without leading, astray in false tracks, in peril of the powers of darkness. If He came back to this world to-day in the flesh and saw men and women as we know them, do we suppose for one moment that His judgment would be changed? Humanity is not so different from what it was in His day. The form of man's motives may have changed, but his spirit is the same. There

is the same building of hopes and ambitions on material things ; there are the same standards of judgment, the measuring of success and prosperity by the material possessions that men hold. Among individuals and nations we find the same struggle after material aims.

We have only to ask ourselves what men commonly understand by progress in these days to see how deep the mischief has gone. We think not only of the men and women who are living out their lives in the sordid and blatant pursuit of purely selfish and material ends. Even some of those whom we rank among the benefactors of mankind, and among humble and loyal Christians within the Church, seem to have been seized by these false conceptions of progress. If we ask thoughtful, and even Christian, men and women whether they believe that the world is moving upwards, some of them will tell us that they think it is, and some may say they think it is not. But if we ask them by what they are measuring its progress or lack of progress, we shall usually find that it is by the material standards of contentment that are current in the world around us.

When some of our politicians, and many of our Christian social workers, begin to speak to us of a better world, we find that what they mean is a world in which higher standards of material comfort will have become common, where there is more leisure, more culture, greater ease and less of the burden and strain of toil. Very often, far too often, they touch no higher thought than that.

One of the biggest questions that the Christian Church has to face and answer in these days is whether we have any right to speak of progress in such a sense as that; whether that is what we Christians can ever mean by it: whether indeed we have any right to assume, as so many do assume, that that is the goal, the inevitable goal, of this world-order in which we live. To begin with, I do not think that men of science, upon whose opinion so great stock is sometimes placed, would support that view. I mention this not because I think the word of the man of science is always the final word, but because so many people contrast science with religion, to the disadvantage of the latter, and pin their faith to the former. We have seen how many of those most ready to accept conclu-

sions that are supposed to be scientific upon religious matters have the rosiest visions of this earth's future. But if you speak to a man of science about it, the conclusion he comes to is, not that life will grow easier and more pleasant, as the history of mankind comes to its end, but that this world will go out either in a blaze, as it collides with some other star in space, or that it will freeze out in utter cold, so that the last stage of humanity upon this earth will be one of desperate and unavailing struggle of the last lone men with the whole universe against them. That, perhaps, is the end to which this race must come. If you consider history, he would be a bold historian who would assert, when the story of this last decade comes to be told two or three hundred years hence, that these ten years have been more full of satisfaction for humanity, that the world was better, than it was, say, three hundred years ago. Yet, if human progress as commonly understood is inevitable, there should surely be no doubt of it.

But I am more concerned here with what we read in the Scriptures, for they more deeply concern us Christian men and women at such

a time as this. We do not find there that progress is talked of as a steady and certain process towards an end of this age in which those ambitions that we so often set ourselves for humanity are to be realized. We find St. Paul speaking as if the end of the world order may be worse than much that went before, a terrible time of delusion and anti-christ before this order is superseded by another and a supernatural. And we find Our Lord Jesus Christ Himself speaking as if the end of the age in which He lived was to come suddenly to surprise men in the midst of their shame and sin. I shall not try now to scale the mysterious heights to which such words lead us, but we are surely called upon to notice that neither Our Lord nor St. Paul was contemplating the sort of end that so many of us put before ourselves as the goal for this world, but something that was wholly different from, and utterly independent of, material prosperity and creature comfort. The only thing that progress can mean to Christian men and women is a growing capacity, in the individual and in the Church, for service and self-sacrifice.

If we were asked to state what we think

the goal of this world's progress should be for the Christian, I think we should have to state it in some such way as this. We may imagine a day in which men might have learned to control the earth's movements in relation to other stars. Imagine further that we discovered one of them, inhabited with beings like ourselves, about to collide with us, but that we had the power to move from its way by destroying ourselves, or to go on and take our chance. If you can then imagine a world in which every human being who has power to think and judge would say that this earth must be deleted from the universe that the other world might live, there, I say, you would have a Christian world, a world ready to lift a mighty cross and to face a whole world's Calvary, a society permeated with the spirit of Our Lord Jesus Christ, that of a ready self-sacrifice.

The goal for Christians is not, in the first instance, a humanity existing pleasantly, but a humanity like that. The world must never be conceived by us as a playground for mortals, for then its sorrows and its temptations become unintelligible. It was created for the making of men, to be our school, our



place of probation, our training ground, that immortal souls might be forged (to change the figure) "to shape and use" by the furnace and the hammer. We modern Christians do not "welcome each rebuff that turns earth's smoothness rough." We try to make every roughness smooth. At one moment we affirm that God created the earth and all that in it is: at another we imply how much better it would be if only we had our way with it. We assume a pleasant earth to be the best earth. But may it not be that we should think of this world-order as only one scene in a drama of Eternity? The curtain may drop on it and the last note be tragedy, a cross perhaps. But our faith is that the drama is not done then. In another order there is another scene and it is for that we look, a new order beyond a material one, eternal in the heavens. It is to be won by men of the Christ-like heart. If the world is to win it, then the world must be such as I asked you to imagine, a world prepared for a Calvary. Not until we get the spirit of service and sacrifice into the hearts of men and women and nations, to take the place of the present spirit of seeking and getting

and making, is there any chance of this world moving on to the Christian goal.

All around us we see men striving for largely, and often purely, selfish ends. You will find that many of them have reached much further than, twenty or thirty years ago, anyone thought that they would. Yet with all this striving and getting, we realize that there is not more contentment, and little if any more happiness, in the world than it had then. Not by that road does satisfaction come to the soul of man. Only when he learns to look away from these lower material ends to see this world with its hopes and promises in the light of that eternal background of which we have our assurance as we come into touch with God, only then will a rebuke be laid on all such selfishness, and larger hopes and more spiritual purposes be born and have their sway, and this world have any chance of its salvation. Our task, as Christian men and women, is to do all that in us lies to convert a world in which material motives and selfishness are the main things which make up the life of men, into a world of humanity that is moved and inspired by the deepest desires for service and for the

welfare of all the race, at whatever cost to each individual that welfare may be gained.

To us, as members of the one Church of Christ, whatever our differences may be, this task is given, through the commission of Our Lord. We have to go with His converting power and His reconciling word to men, to offer them the satisfaction that they will not gain in any other way, and to make them men and women after the fashion and according to the stature of Christ Himself. Social results men commonly describe as beneficent may follow. They will be secondary, a by-product. But this is primary. It was to do this that Our Lord came. He spent His time making disciples, and the first charge that He gave to His followers was that they should make disciples for Him.

In this day, as in that, when we speak of disciples of Christ, the word *disciple* means two things. First of all, it means one who comes to the Master, Who is meek and lowly in heart, to *learn* of Him. It means also one who enters into *fellowship* with the living Lord and Saviour. If men are to become disciples of Jesus Christ, those are the two things needed—teaching and fellowship, or,

if you will, "Witness and Fellowship," as our programme has it. Let us change the latter word, because it has been worn and has lost some of its value and charm by much rough use, and I would say that witness and *friendship* are the two great things that the Christian Church must reveal and offer to the world of men to-day.

## II

First, we are called to be witnesses to the power of God that we have discovered for ourselves in Jesus Christ.

There is one great note in every big forward movement in the history of the Christian Church. In the day of Pentecost, in the Franciscan movement, in the Reformation, in the Revival of the eighteenth century, with the Wesleys and Whitefield, and in other days of power nearer to our own time, you will always find not only that prayer has been behind any great movement of that kind, but that there has been a revival of the ministry of the Word. In this day I think there is nothing so much needed as a revival of preaching. I do not mean preaching in any narrow and technical sense. We may have

our own standards of what we call preaching. We may decide that licences are necessary for certain buildings, or for certain people. We may have conscientious convictions about such matters. But about this we must all be agreed, if we are Christian men at all, that the obligation is laid upon us all who are servants and followers of the Master, to go forth and, in some way, and by some means, bear witness in word, in deed, in life, to the power to save and to keep that we have discovered in our experience. It is no light task to be called upon to carry out. There never was a harder time in the history of the Christian Church for men and women to preach Christ and Him crucified. When we think of the problems that are being hurled at us, of the intellectual ferment of this last century, of the questions that have been raised as a result of this war through which we have passed, of the ideas of popularized science seething in the minds of young people, we know that a man takes upon his shoulders a great responsibility when he begins to speak for his religion. Yet we all here are bidden to do that, to say the things we have seen and heard to other men, not in language that they

cannot grasp, not even in sonorous phrases from the Pauline Epistles, dear though they be to so many of us through long association with them, but in the simplest language we can find, to tell out to others what the Lord Jesus has been to us. We remember that those who have gone forth to witness for Him have not always been perfect, they have not invariably been preachers with deep understanding of His whole truth. When He sent His first apostles to preach through the cities and towns of Galilee, the Gospel story makes it perfectly plain that the meaning and real significance of His work and Person had scarcely begun to dawn upon them. Yet He sent them out to preach, and at the end He gave them His commission to "Go into all the world and preach." What a charge for such men as we know they were!

I have sometimes spoken of a memory that I have of my childhood days, when my father was teaching me to swim. He took me out into the sea above my depth, then, watching for an incoming wave, flung me upon it and said, "Now, go!" The boy thought he was going to drown, but there was no danger. His father saw to that. Little by little he

began to feel power come into his limbs and courage into his heart, and he discovered that the waves that he thought were going to overwhelm him were lifting him up and bearing him on. And those disciples to whom Jesus gave the command to preach the very little they already knew, found that when telling out their message the power came, and the deeps that they thought would engulf them carried them on. He comes to us all and asks us to preach, to speak, to witness for Him. It may be a feeble witness oftentimes. We shall soon get out of our depths, but if we are faithful we shall quickly know that He is there watching and caring for us, with a hand ready to hold us up, and we shall discover that, as we begin to make the truth plain to others, it becomes clearer to ourselves, and that a strength greater than ours lifts us up and bears us on. A great revival in this work of witness-bearing to the word of God as it has been revealed in Christ to your life and mine is the first thing the world needs to-day. If there is to come a glorious spring-time into the heart of England, we Christians must go and tell men what Christ has been to us. If He has come to you in your hour of sorrow



and lifted up your head, tell others of it. If He has come to any woman here when she carried a load of care that well-nigh broke her, and made the way bright for her, let her tell other women who are burdened. If He has rescued some man of you in the hour of desperate temptation and brought him through with clean hands and a glad heart, do not forget there are men around you being tempted sorely every day. Tell them that, what things the Lord hath done for you.

### III

Beside witness we need *fellowship*. God has set us in companies, and it is through our association, our fellowship, our friendship, as I like to call it (for Christ called His disciples His friends), that we are destined to reach the best He has to give us. We do not cultivate friendship as we should. We do not find in our churches that vivid realization of the oneness of believers in Jesus Christ, and that helpfulness and eagerness to serve each other, that we ought to find. Yet until we can prove that we have that among us, men are not going to turn to us to get what they need. They believe in friendship, they

look for it. How is it in the churches that we attend? Let us begin there. These are the right places at which to begin. The day of corporate union between the various parts of the body of Christ may be far off. But, at any rate, we can learn, little by little, to love one another and to work together better than we have done in the past. We are doing it here to-night. Why cannot we always be doing it? Why cannot we begin to do it more completely in the congregations and communions to which we severally belong? Do those strangers who come into your assemblies find the friendship and companionship they need, and meet with that Christ Whom they ought to find when they come in? If some woman should come into your congregation on any Sunday, bowed down with heavy anxiety, will she find that she can go out and face the world again with a smile and a strong heart? If any man should come in, feeling that he has nearly lost his battle, will he be able, when he goes out, to square his shoulders and believe that there is nothing he cannot do in the fight, nothing he cannot win through, by the power of Christ? Only as we make men and women

around us feel our intense interest in them, only as they find in us the friendship of Jesus, and see that it moves us to help them, only then will they be convinced that we possess a power to save this world.

When we have gone a little way in witnessing as we ought, and in offering to the world the friendship that Christians ought to give, then it may be that some of our questions will settle themselves. We shall draw more close together, and in common action and experience many of these problems that vex and oppress us will be taken off our hearts. We have to bring men into discipleship to Jesus Christ. Through our witness and through our friendship we have to lead them to Him. When they have come into living touch with Him and so share His experience, they will discover that they begin to see everything from His angle, and know men and the world and God Himself as He knew them. Then the life of sordid aims will be left, and another life, a life in Him, will begin. You remember how, when a man came to the Lord and asked Him to divide the inheritance, He flashed round upon the men about Him and said,

“Take heed, and beware of covetousness.” And at once He launched into that parable of the man who had filled his garner, and in that night when he thought to take his ease, the finger of death touched him. It seems hard. But that time it was God’s way, and Jesus thought it right. Of a sudden He brought that man, with all his success and wealth, and set him in a picture side by side with the purpose of God, and in the light of the eternal the true values stand out. Carlyle tells us in his memoir of his father, that he recalled one prayer his father used to offer every day: “Lord, teach us to remember those solemn events, death, judgment and immortality.” That is what Jesus did for men. He set them looking through those western windows, and when the light shines in from God, from Christ, from the eternal world, upon lives filled with selfish and trivial purposes, all that is sordid must stand revealed and condemned in the blaze and glory of it. The world’s need—it is the knowledge of the glory of God that shone in the face of Christ Jesus. How shall it know unless in us and through us it finds His truth and His love?



## THE CHURCH'S RESPONSE

BY THE REV. CANON T. GUY ROGERS, M.C., B.D.

“ O LORD, show Thy servants Thy work, and their children Thy glory ; the glorious majesty of the Lord be upon us. O prosper Thou our handiwork ” (Ps. xc. 16, 17).

“ Show Thy servants Thy work.” It is God’s work that we want to see. We have seen too much of the devil’s work, some of us at any rate. We have seen it in ruined homes, in shattered lives, in countries ravaged by the War. We can trace signs of the devil’s work in industry and commerce. It stares at us in certain places in our social life—the white slave traffic, the excesses of the drink traffic. We can add up a long, sad list of evidence. It meets us within as well as without the Church.

And we have seen too much of man’s work independent of God. Man has built cities

and founded empires ; he has converted barter into the elaborate system of exchange. It does not follow that man has increased the happiness of his fellow beings. He has learned to control the forces of nature. He has yoked them to his own particular purpose. And yet it does not follow that his purpose is always a high or beneficent one. He has shown great skill in the amassing of the raw products of the world, but he has not shown equal skill in their distribution. We live for the most part hating, fearing, taking advantage of one another, and valuing the wrong things. Man's work does not satisfy.

It is God's work that we want, the sign of His craftsmanship, the mark of His design, the proof of His architecture. The cry goes up, as from the Psalmist of old, " Lord, show Thy people Thy work " ; let the Eternal manifest Himself in time, let God come to our help, let the arm of the Lord be revealed, and man shall yet find his way to the realization of his own nature, to the fulfilment of his dreams.

We have been passing through a bad time. Our Treaty of Peace has not realized all that



we hoped from it. We are conscious that many disappointments have been suffered, and many illusions exploded. The time has come for us to fall back upon God. I use that phrase, and yet as I use it I wonder whether I am right in doing so, because so often we speak of "falling back upon God" as if it was the last desperate resort. I remember going down to preach a sermon in my church one evening when the time for preparation had been short. I had a friend with me, and I said to him: "I'm afraid there's nothing for me to-night but to fall back upon God." My friend replied: "That's the way always with you parsons; when there's nothing else you can do—not till then: you say that you fall back upon God." Well, that is not the sense in which I use the words to-night. And yet, even if we have to fall back upon God in that old sense, far better is it that we should discover our mistake before it is too late; and if we have dared to advance to the reconstruction of the world without God, it is better that we should retreat and find out what His plan is, what His purpose is, and along what lines our working ought to be. But when I say

we must fall back upon God I mean that we must welcome into our lives a new sense of faith, a new certainty of His presence, a new conviction of His power.

Take this wonderful Psalm from which I have taken these words—the 90th Psalm. How glorious it is in these days ; with what inspiration it comes to us in our staleness. “ Lord, Thou hast been our refuge from one generation to another.” This man who wrote the Psalm looks out upon human life, and he sees it in all its troubled aspects, as we have seen it. He does not burke the view : he faces it. “ Our days are gone like a tale that is told ”—a tale told by the fireside—quickly told, soon forgotten. Our days pass like a river flood that rises with the storm and ebbs away when the rain is over. We leave behind us no more permanent trace than that which is left on the march through the desert by the ashes of the camp-fires lit by the caravans—lit in the evening, extinguished in the morning. So he goes down into the valley of humiliation with exploded hopes and disappointed illusions. But he does not stay there. As he began on the mountain-top : “ Lord, Thou hast been

our refuge," so he comes up on the mountain-top again, and climbs the hill of vision, "O Lord, show Thy servants Thy work, and their children Thy glory." He squares his shoulders to the blows of circumstance, he faces all the blasts of the situation. "Let God show Himself to His people, let the glorious majesty of the Lord our God be upon us, and then our handiwork shall be prospered."

Now when God manifests Himself in answer to our prayer, how will He do it? He will not show Himself in the sudden clearing off of the National Debt. We need not look for a further humiliation of our enemies. We need not look for a further extension of our Empire. In God's name we have enough responsibility to grapple with already! It is not in material things that we shall find His presence revealed, at first, at any rate. For it is God's way to work in the heart and in the mind and in the will and in the character, and it is through these that God's impact and impress upon the social life is effected. It is thus that God will show Himself.

But there is another point that I must deal with here, for it is of absolute importance.

He will show Himself in Jesus Christ and through Him. The impact of God upon the world will be made through the spirit of Jesus Christ manifested in the world. We sometimes make the mistake of thinking that we are to go on looking for God to manifest Himself, that we are to watch the heavens to perceive His presence, to wait for something to happen in history, when all the time our prayer has been answered already. For in the incarnation of Jesus Christ you have the Psalmist's prayer already answered in its fullness. "Lord, show Thy work!" Behold He has shown Himself to us in Jesus Christ. In the story of the Incarnation, in the redemption of the Cross, in the power of the Resurrection, we find the answer to the prayer, "Lord, show Thy servants Thy work." It is not as if we were to look for God, but rather it is for us to apply that wonderful Gospel of God, which has been manifested in Jesus Christ.

We have been talking to-night about the world's needs. The Church is not ashamed of the Gospel of Christ, which is the power of God unto salvation. If you take the world's great needs to-day, I say healing has been

manifested in Jesus. God's remedial work is there. We have spoken, for example, of the need of FELLOWSHIP. Can you build up fellowship except upon the moral foundation? "If we walk in the light, as He is in the light, we have fellowship one with another." I know no other basis on which to build up the brotherhood of man than that supplied to us through the knowledge of the fatherhood of God revealed in Jesus.

Or again, look out upon the world's need of DISCIPLINE to-day. I knew something of external discipline applied to me in the Army! I know, too, the effect of external discipline unless it is accepted willingly from within. We are suffering at this present time from the reaction from the external discipline of the War. Unless it is welcomed spiritually, the moment the external discipline is withdrawn the man is out to gratify himself and to have a good time to make up for it. The secret of discipline cannot be discovered simply by law or by force apart from moral persuasion; and the world needs discipline, for none of our great dreams can be fulfilled without it. You cannot go on building unless there is discipline on the part of the builder. You cannot

attempt social service unless we unite to discipline ourselves for the purpose. Where is discipline to come from? There is no political party in the country that does not long for some kind of discipline to be applied to the citizens of the country that might enable our vision to be fulfilled. Every one is crying out for some spiritual force to enable programmes to be realized. I know not where you will find that moral and spiritual discipline which controls the whole man, and which bids us to submit to the will of God, except in the spirit of Jesus.

Why does the spirit of Jesus master the world? It is because it has been mastered in the first place by the love of God. It is Jesus who blends all loyalties together and sets them in their right relationships with one another, and shows that all loyalties are sacred to the service of God.

Finally, is not the world at this moment in need of AN OBJECTIVE? People are talking, and they do not know what they are talking about; people are hurrying in all directions, and they do not know whither they are hurrying; people are out to build, and they scarcely study the outline and the

plan. It is for some one to reveal to the world the objective that it is blindly seeking. And yet, there again, as we say the words, "Lord, show Thy servants Thy work," we find our answer in Jesus. It is true that we are tending toward the international mind, gradually approximating to something truly Catholic in its meaning. But where is the final answer to the world's hope? It is only in the objective outlined for us by Jesus and His apostles—the kingdom of God. So I see that the power of redemption lies behind and below our social life. I see men being brought into new union with God through that redemption of Calvary. I see the objective of the world, now obscure, being gradually cleared. I see the necessary moral discipline being exercised as the spirit of Christ prevails. "Lord, show Thy servants Thy work." It is not with any disheartenment that we wait for the answer. God has given it to us.

I will try to drive my message home by saying to you that in this matter every one of us has got a part to play; for God's work has got to be done through us. There are three things, I think, that you always see in God's work when it is revealed. In the



first place, it is very SIMPLE ; in the second place it is very PERSONAL ; and in the third place it is very THOROUGH. It is very simple. There are some people who never see the signs of the presence of God until it is manifested on a world scale, in a world movement. We are obsessed with this idea of bigness. Everything must be big before we appreciate it. In my parish, if we want to advertise a concert, we nearly always advertise it as a Grand Concert, because we want to attract people by the thought of its bigness rather than by the thought of the merit of the artists ! So it is wherever you go. This bigness obsesses us. Yet when Jesus came it was so simple. He was born in a manger, the background of His life was a little village ! How small an arena for Him in which to play His wonderful part ! Born of a peasant mother ! During His lifetime scarcely anyone appreciated the significance of His person or His teaching. It all seems so small to the great world. And yet there, in the simplicity of Jesus, was God's work revealed, and the great dynamic movement of the Gospel begins. God deliver us from always looking for bigness, when in the simple things God is speak-

ing to us all the time. In gentleness, in courtesy, in unselfishness, in the little acts of daily life where the beauty of Christian character is revealed—there the work of God is going forward. It is very simple.

Again, God's work is PERSONAL. That is how God manifested Himself in Jesus. How else can we lay hold of Him? How else can He come to the World? How often has it been said that God has no other feet to travel through this world than ours, no other hands to work with Him than ours, and if God's smile is to be revealed it must be through the sunshine of our faces. You cannot withdraw yourself and stand aside from God and bid God work; for the law of our life is that it is only when God and man are blended in one perfect harmony that God's will and purpose can be done. God's will halts from generation to generation because men will not yield themselves as instruments to His purpose.

Lastly. It must be very THOROUGH. God's work is always thorough. Have you ever studied how penetrating, how searchingly penetrating, are the principles of Jesus? Have you ever weighed up the thoroughness

of Jesus by the fact that He went to the Cross for our salvation? Have you appreciated the tremendous lack of compromise that there is about Jesus? How thorough He is in all His thought and action; how wide the horizon, how penetrating the forward look! There is no thought of expediency, no compromise for advantage. How searching is the work of God revealed in Christ, whether it touches our conscience, or whether it touches principles! If you and I are to have our share in this work for God, the Spirit of God must search our conscience, must search our life, must affect every part of our being. It is because we live our lives in watertight compartments, it is because the Spirit of God affects us only at one place or another, that our work is so superficial and lacks so much of the element of the eternal. If you would work for God, you must be prepared to yield yourself to the Spirit of God for guidance, and you must submit your life to Him; and if we do it, then indeed the vision of the Psalmist will be fulfilled: "Show Thy people Thy work, and their children Thy glory."

It may be that in this day—in our genera-

tion—we shall never really see the glory of God. It may be that things are too shattered, that life is too sundered and divided. It may be too much for us to expect the manifestation of God's glory in our social life. First, there must be "work," and then there will be "glory." I know there is a glory in the eternal heavens reserved for us, which we shall inherit. But I am thinking to-night of the social life and the glory that we desire in this world. It may be that we shall not see it in our day. "Show Thy servants Thy work," and then their children shall "see Thy glory." There is no glory without work. Behind the glory of Westminster Abbey lies the work of successive multitudes of workmen. Behind any glory of architecture, of sculpture, of painting, behind any glory of creation, lie ages of evolution. First the work, and then the glory. If we are faithful in our day and generation—if we witness and work for God—if we are true to such craftsmanship as God has put into our hands, those who come after us shall see "glory"—such as is difficult for us in these days to conceive.



## THE COMING OF CHRIST

BY THE REV. DINSDALE T. YOUNG

THE great ideal that has been before us has been the call of the Church, first, to fellowship, and then to witness. We have seen how emphatic that call is, and we have heard, to our advantage, some signs of the response of the Church.

But now the question arises: Is the call urgent? and my submission to you to-night is that it is intensely urgent. Supposing somebody said "Why?" special reasons might be instantly assigned, one hundred reasons. I shall put one or two before you. The Lord Jesus is coming back to the earth again. That is, I would argue, the most urgent aspect of the urgency. Surely Christian people ought to have fellowship one with another if the Lord may return at any moment. What if He came to find a disrupted

Christian unity? I do not speak of the Evangelical Alliance, with whom I am delighted to be associated. I do not speak about ecclesiastical uniformity. Many of us do not believe that denominationalism came into the world by accident. We do not believe that the devil introduced it. That there has been too much of it we steadfastly believe. But we are not pleading to-night for uniformity. We plead for the far more beautiful thing of unity. I believe there is far greater unity among Evangelical Christians to-day than most Evangelical Christians realize. If we went back to Church history we should find that we have often been too pessimistic. There has been a far deeper union in the matter of belief in the essential things among Christian people through the centuries, than many have realized. One of the joys of the age in which we live, whatever its depression, is that probably the spirit of Christian union never ruled so largely among Christians, never so prospered as, thank God, it is to-day. I had a free Sunday last Sunday, a thing that does not often fall to my lot. At such a time I always try to take an opportunity to hear brethren and to join in the worship of breth-



ren of other sections of the Christian Church. I worshipped last Sunday evening in the Church of England. I am sure Lord Hugh Cecil won't reproach me on that score. I worshipped with the highest profit and delight ; it was good to be there. It warmed the heart of an antiquated Methodist. I venture to say that if his Lordship were in our Methodist testimony meeting that is held every week at the Central Hall, not far from here, and if he said what he said to-night, he would have been greeted with rapturous choruses of " Amens " and " Hallelujahs ! " There is real fellowship, far more real fellowship among Christian people than we often realize. Thank God, the days of bigotry are dying out. Oh, that they may hasten to their eternal death, when the clamant call is for the united witness of the Christian Church. I must not take up your time by at any length discussing what the nature of that witness shall be. But I take an opportunity of saying this, especially as it is somewhat aside from what has so happily occupied our attention up to this evening : The Church has a witness to bear, no doubt, in the realm of politics—especially, in the phrase used by a great

statesman the other day—in creating an atmosphere. I venture to think that creating an atmosphere is vastly better than turning churches into political institutions. The Church has a great witness to bear in commercial life, in social life and every branch of life. But its primary witness is, I think, a spiritual witness. It is a witness, first of all, to the great and—shall I use the word? can a better be found?—fundamental Christian truth, the inspiration and sovereign authority of the Bible, the Bible inspired in such a sense as no other book ever was or ever can be, the Word of God. Yes, and what a witness it has to bear to the doctrine of the Deity of our Lord Jesus Christ, absolutely infallible, absolutely infallible when He speaks on any subject, so I believe; absolutely perfect, the only human Being that ever walked the earth that was absolutely without sin, and therefore must have been more than a human being. For, as Bishop Gore has forcefully said in one of his richest books, “Christ must have been more than a man to have been all that He was as a Man.” The very Manhood carries an irresistible implication of Deity; and the Atoning death, un-

fathomable by any philosophy but the philosophy of God, is realized with such supreme power to every penitent believing heart, and leaves such a deep impression on the conscience, and imparts such potency to the soul, that we can live a godly, righteous and sober life to the glory of God's holy Name. Then there is the doctrine of the sinfulness of sin, and the absolute necessity of regeneration. Our churches ought to ring to-day as never aforetime with the cry, "Ye must be born again." Is not there urgency for such a witness in the pulpit, is not there urgency for such witness in every sphere of life in which we may ever move? Thank God, we do not need to give witness all in the same way. You will sometimes find a man in the Christian Church who says what a mystery it is that every other man is not just like himself. What a mercy! It is a true saying by Phillips Brooks, "that there are as many different kinds of Christians as there are different kinds of men." We may all be filled with the Holy Ghost, every man in his own order, and bear his own witness. But he must bear it. Is it urgent? Certainly. It is urgent for a hundred reasons.

Think of this one. Let me put it in the form of an interrogatory. Is the Lord Jesus Christ coming again? The great historic Creed has declared it. I believe in Creeds, I believe in them thoroughly; but then I am one of those fossilized individuals of whom we hear much in these times. The great Creed, that, thank God, all Evangelical-minded Christians can repeat, says, "From thence He shall come." "He ascended into heaven," and "from thence He shall come." "The third day He rose from the dead." A *physical* resurrection, or else it would not be a resurrection at all. It is playing with words to talk of a spiritistic transformation, a metamorphosis of the soul. That is not resurrection. "I believe in the resurrection of the body." Every Evangelical Christian says, "He rose the third day, He ascended on high, and He shall come again." Is not it strange—and I say it in no murmuring spirit—that the *Catholic* Church, in the legitimate sense of that term, the whole company of Christian believers, has through these long years declared that sublime and romantic belief, and yet the fact is so little realized, "From thence He shall come,"

When I open my Bible I say, "Now is that Creed broad-based upon this Book?" For perish all Creeds that are not rooted in the infallible Word of God. The more I read that Book the more I seem to see, with a vividness that I cannot trust myself to describe to you, that He is coming again. The Old Testament simply seethes with prophecy not only of His first coming, but of His second. I am not to discuss to-night points of exegesis. But I will venture to say, in passing, that we are constantly straining Old Testament prophecies and endeavouring to make them tally with facts of the Lord's first coming. They won't do it. Why? The clue is that they refer to the Lord's second coming.

Then I open my New Testament, and what do I find? When I try to open it impartially and read the Gospels, beginning with the Master Himself, I have to put a most unnatural meaning upon language if I do not find revealed there that He is to come again. How is He to come? I turn from the Gospels to the Acts for that, and as to the Acts of the Apostles, the great delineation of the early Christians, they scintillate with this truth. How do they reveal Him as

coming? Personally, physically, visibly. In other words, He is to come as He went. How did He go? All this is very elementary to some of you who have been studying these questions all your life; but it is good to be reminded of elementary things. The angels, the great gossellers of the second coming, as they were the great gossellers of the first coming, said, "Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven?" They were forlorn, they had an intense sense of bereavement. Jesus had gone as a bodily presence. But "Why stand ye gazing up into heaven? This same Jesus"—I confess I love that translation, the old translation of those verses; I believe there is an immense deal to be said for it—"This same Jesus"—mark the literality—"shall so come"; and as if that were not enough, the angels add, "in like manner as ye have seen Him go." How did He go? Physically. To use a word that is sometimes applied sarcastically to some of us who teach this great doctrine that the Christian Church has declared in its Creed—"Spectacularly." A man said to me the other day that he was not looking for a spectacular return of the Lord. I am, be-



cause the angel said, as I understand it, that it is to be spectacular. He is so to come in like manner as He went.

When I turn to the Epistles it is simply startling to see how they insist on that personal return, that visible, physical return. The two Epistles to the Thessalonians might be described as the Epistles of our Lord's second advent. Our Lord enunciated the doctrine first. It was no fad of Paul's. There are many people to-day who have a great objection to Paul and his theology. Some of us revel with Paul in his theology. It was no fad of Paul's. One of the acutest theological writers of to-day has made this statement: That it is not saying too much to affirm that it was the annunciation of His personal return that led to our Lord's death. So it was. The Epistles simply seethe with that doctrine. As for Revelation, it is one great message of our Lord's second coming.

I am not here to-night to debate the question as to when He comes. In fact, are we not forbidden to look at this matter from the standpoint of times and seasons? Might I, in a parenthesis, say to young people who may not have studied this subject: Do not allow



yourselves to be prejudiced against it because fanatics have done foolishly with it? It is one of the master-strokes of the devil, that when he wants a precious doctrine prejudiced he creates foolish advocates of that doctrine. A Methodist preacher said: "If the devil wants great service rendered, he gets some fool of a Christian to do it." It was a homely way of expressing a great truth. Do not be poisoned against this precious doctrine because some cranks have given themselves to fixing dates, and perverted it. Not even the editors of the weekly religious papers know when it will be! But there stands the truth of the Creed, I venture to say, so clearly set out in God's Book that you have to twist language in the most fantastic fashion in order to achieve any other interpretation.

If people say that our Lord's return was the destruction of Jerusalem, or that it is the death of the individual Christian, or that the only return of Christ that we are warranted to look for is a revival of religion—I deny it, I deny it warmly, I deny it in the name of the Holy Scriptures. There is another coming. He shall come, and He shall come even as He went. If that be true, what urgency there

is for the Church to bear its witness and to cultivate its fellowship. May He come at any time? Yes. Did He say He would come "quickly"? He did. Is not the whole colouring of the New Testament revelation a colouring of what I may call *urgency*? If our Lord and His servants had not said it, we dare not say it or believe it. But to the unbelieving, Christ-rejecting world, our Lord, as He Himself said, will come "as a thief in the night," with all the startlingness and terrifyingness of a thief in the night.

I do not want to dogmatize on it. But while we are not allowed to fix times and seasons, abundant signs are given us whereby we may know that the coming of the Lord draweth nigh. I venture to say that there is an increasing multitude in the *Catholic* Church, in the true definition of the term, that sees an accumulation of signs such as history never witnessed before. There is the decay of faith among many Christian people, the sign of a "falling away." If any man thinks there is no falling away, I cannot honestly congratulate him on his observation of the signs of the time. Is the Gospel preached in all pulpits? Is the question

answered everywhere clearly, unequivocally, "What must I do to be saved?"? Can a man, when he comes into any church, be sure that it will be indicated to him how he can make his peace with God, and how his sins can be forgiven, and how his nature can be changed, and how he can be sanctified? I am afraid we dare not say that men can reckon on that everywhere; but they ought to be able to. There are many other signs on which I will not dilate.

But it all comes to this. If our Lord's coming may take place at any time; if He said it was "a little while," and if two thousand years have rolled over, what a little while it must be now, not till the end of the world, but till the end of this age. Is not there urgency in the call to the Church to bear its witness and to delight in its fellowship? There is tremendous urgency. I would venture, before sitting down, to ask you to seek the guiding light of the Holy Spirit on this subject. There has been a great movement in London of late years among Church of England clergy and Nonconformist ministers—I think one of the most fruitful spiritual movements London has known for many

years—a great movement for testimony to the Lord's personal return. There is peculiar blessing resting on it. For if a man realizes that the Lord may at any time appear in the clouds of heaven, that man must seek to live a beautiful Christian life. It has a sanctifying effect. He must be earnest in his Evangelism. If I am a preacher I cannot read little bits of moral philosophical essays in the pulpit if I believe that perhaps before the service ends the Lord may descend. It will put teeth into your sermon if you believe this ; it will give edge to your utterance.

I should be thankful to have borne that testimony to-night if you would go home, any of you that have not reflected on it, and read your Bible carefully and candidly from that point of view. Oh that we might all be looking for Him. How kind it would make us, how genial, how unselfish, how industrious. How anxious it would make us, above everything else, to serve our age. There are people who say that if you give way to this belief in the Lord's personal return you will lose an interest in the time in which you live. Nonsense ! You will have an augmented interest. It tends to citizenship,

it tends to your Christianity ; and Christianity our sad age needs. It is a beautiful urgency, and not a repellent urgency—the fact of our Lord's return. Frederick Meyers speaks of being “ faint for the flaming of His Advent feet.”

Oh that we may all be “ faint for the flaming of His Advent feet ! ”

"UNUM CORPUS SUMUS IN CHRISTO."

# **WORLD'S EVANGELICAL ALLIANCE**

*(BRITISH ORGANIZATION),*

**19 Russell Square, London, W.C. 1.**

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**T**HE World's Evangelical Alliance had its origin in a spontaneous and widespread desire on the part of Evangelical Christian people in different Churches and Countries for a visible Association which might manifest and promote Christian Unity and Co-operation.

At a remarkable Conference of 800 Christians in Freemasons' Hall, London, August, 1846, the Alliance had its birth. The meeting was composed of members of the Church of England, Presbyterians, Congregationalists, Methodists, Baptists, Lutherans, Moravians and others, and included many distinguished divines and philanthropists from the United States of America, France, Germany, Switzerland, and other countries, as well as from the United Kingdom.

The Basis of the Alliance is comprehensive of the common faith of all true Christians from the beginning. If emphasis is laid upon one part of that faith more than another it is upon the "Divine Inspiration, Authority, and Sufficiency of the Holy Scriptures"; the proper Deity, Humanity, and Atoning work of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ as the one Source of Salvation and the centre of all true Christian Union and Fellowship; and the Person and work of the Holy Spirit.

## **1. Union of Protestant Churches and Christians**

Branches of the Alliance were quickly formed throughout Evangelical Christendom and even among the missionaries of Turkey, India, Japan, etc. These have now spread and have

become a powerful influence in present-day aspirations towards Christian Unity.

Representatives exist in one hundred countries of the world. Some of the most practical work of the Alliance has been in the Mission Field, where the healing of differences between Christian workers has resulted in definite spiritual revival and the salvation of souls.

Eleven International Conferences have been held in the great capitals of the Christian world, and while they resemble the Œcumenical Councils of the Romish or Greek Church in their widespread influence, they differ from them in having neither disciplinary nor legislative rights, but only moral and spiritual power.

At these Conferences Christians from all countries, speaking many languages, are brought together for united worship, for brotherly intercourse and for free discussion. They have proved that freedom of conscience and Christian Union are not merely not antagonistic, but essential to each other; that freedom is the basis of union, and union the result and support of freedom.

Each of these eleven International Conferences has been, moreover, of a special Missionary character, drawing together Missionary forces from all parts of the world. The printed programme of each Conference has had one section devoted to World-Missionary effort, while one day of the Universal Week of Prayer is annually devoted to Foreign Missions.

## 2. Religious Liberty, Relief of Persecuted Christians, etc.

As these sacred words are capable of misuse and perversion, we wish to say that we use them in their fullest and most restricted sense in which they are understood in Protestant countries, especially in Great Britain and America. Freedom of conscience as distinguished from mere toleration is the birthright of every man, and with it goes that freedom of worship which it is the duty of Governments to protect.

The Alliance was the first organization in the world formed to aid those who are persecuted for the faith of Christ. It has



accomplished much, more than can be told here, in Spain, Czechoslovakia, Italy, Korea, Transylvania, Sweden, Russia, and other countries, and some of its most important work for religious liberty has been done in Mohammedan or heathen lands.

Beyond its widespread influence at home the Alliance is privileged to come to the aid of Churches and Christians witnessing for the Evangelical Faith in lands where such are often oppressed and menaced. In some lands the intolerance of Roman Catholicism can only be met by practical aid to threatened causes and peoples, by the support of special Agents, as in Malta, Russia, etc., and by the alert and immediate intervention of a central Society in the interests of Religious Liberty. In other lands the devastation of War has destroyed resources in centres of Evangelical work where adherents look to the Alliance for sympathy and aid in re-establishing their witness. In Russia and other parts of the Near and Far East there are Christians in bitter suffering, many of them known and honoured leaders in Christian service. It is to the Alliance that these turn for sympathy and succour. Service of this order is usually too delicate and personal to be tabulated in a Report, but it is a needful and manifest Christian duty.

In every mission land with a recognized and responsible government the Alliance has come to be looked upon as a court of appeal for Religious Liberty and for those oppressed for Christ's sake. Its unsectarian spirit, its freedom from all political trammels, and its world-wide ramifications, qualify and entitle it to make petition or protest to any Government in the world, and have always secured it a respectful hearing.

### 3. The Universal Week of Prayer

Not the least important of the operations of the Alliance is the organization of the Week of Prayer, commencing with the first Lord's Day of each year. While such a week was observed in London and other British centres from the first inception of the Alliance, its development into a concert of prayer by Christians in different lands was due to the English and American missionaries at Ludhiana, India, who urged this extension of the original scheme. This was in 1859, and the Missionary Conference held in Liverpool in 1860, having considered a proposal for the setting apart of special prayer for Missions at the

commencement of 1861, expressed their earnest hope that such a plan might be carried into effect. One of the Ludhiana Missionaries, the Rev. Mr. Morrison, then addressed a letter to the Alliance proposing that their call to prayer should now be addressed to Christians in every part of the world. Thus, happily, at the instance of missionaries was inaugurated that Week of Prayer which has become Universal.

The annual invitation to observe the first complete week of the new year in this way bears the signatures of well-known men in many lands and is responded to by Christians all over the world. It is particularly gratifying to note that the whole of the Protestant Missionary Societies, the British and Foreign Bible Society, the Religious Tract Society, and other inter-denominational organizations cordially co-operate with the Evangelical Alliance each year in circulating the programme of Prayer for the Week throughout the Mission fields of the world.

The Alliance pays annually for the translation of its Programme of Prayer into various languages and dialects, and for its circulation to Mission stations in many lands.

#### **4. Missionary and Evangelistic Work**

In addition to practical work, Devotional, Missionary and Philanthropic, the Alliance is engaged in various enterprises of direct Gospel work at home and abroad. Its Evangelical and Missionary character, its world-wide interests and influence and its comprehensive platform supply an approved agency through which the preaching of the Gospel of Christ is being effectively promoted. The Christian Union and Co-operation which the Alliance represents is the most urgent need of the present time, and the Council appeals to Christians of all Churches, ladies as well as gentlemen, to join the Membership of the Alliance.

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Those willing to join the Membership of the Alliance or to become Subscribers are asked kindly to address

**THE GENERAL SECRETARY,**

**World's Evangelical Alliance,**

**19 Russell Square, London, W.C. 1.**









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